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JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

Jayaprakash Narayan October 11, 1902 - October 8, 1979, widely known as JP, was an Indian freedom fighter and political leader, remembered especially for leading the opposition to Indira Gandhi in the 1970s and for giving a call for peaceful Total Revolution. His biography, Jayaprakash, was written by his nationalist friend and an eminent writer of Hindi literature, Ramavriksha Benipuri.

EARLY LIFE

Narayan was born in Sitabdiara village between Ballia District of UP and Saran District of Bihar. His father Harsudayal was a junior official in the canal department of the State government and was often touring the region. Jayaprakash, called Baul affectionately, was left with his grandmother to study in Sitabdiara. There was no high school in the village, so Jayaprakash was sent to Patna to study in the Collegiate School. He excelled in school. His essay, "The present state of Hindi in Bihar", won a best essay award. He entered the Patna College on a Government scholarship.

In October, 1920 Jayaprakash was married to Prabhavati Devi, a freedom fighter in her own right and a staunch disciple of Kasturba Gandhi. Prabhavati was the daughter of lawyer and nationalist Brij Kishore Prasad, one of the first Gandhians in Bihar and one who played a major role in Gandhi's campaign in Champaran. She often held opinions which were not in agreement with JP's views, but Narayan respected her independence. On Gandhiji's invitation, she stayed at his Sabarmati Ashram while Jayaprakash continued his studies.

In 1922, Narayan went to the United States, where he worked to support his studies in political science, sociology and economics at the University of California, Berkeley, University of Iowa, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Ohio State University. He adopted Marxism while studying at the University of Wisconsin-Madison under sociologist Edward A. Ross; he was also deeply influenced by the writings of M. N. Roy. Financial constraints and his mother's health forced him to abandon his wish of earning a PhD. He became acquainted with Rajani Palme Dutt and other revolutionaries in London on his way back to India.

After returning to India, Narayan joined the Indian National Congress on the invitation of Jawaharlal Nehru in 1929; M. K. Gandhi became his mentor in the Congress. He was personally close, among others, to the great Gandhian Bihar Bibhuti Dr. Anugrah Narayan Sinha; a prominent leader of the time and a close colleague of Brajkishore Prasad. During the Indian independence movement he was arrested, jailed, and tortured several times by the British. He won particular fame during the Quit India movement.

After being jailed in 1932 for civil disobedience against British rule, Narayan was imprisoned in Nasik Jail, where he met Ram Manohar Lohia, Minoo Masani, Achyut Patwardhan, Ashok Mehta, Yusuf Desai and other national leaders. After his release, the Congress Socialist Party, or (CSP), a left-wing group within the Congress, was formed with Acharya Narendra Deva as President and Narayan as General secretary.

During the Quit India Movement of 1942, when senior Congress leaders were arrested in the early stages, JP, Lohia and Basawon Singh (Sinha) were at the forefront of the agitations. Leaders such as Jayaprakash Narayan and Aruna Asaf Ali were described as "the political children of Gandhi but recent students of Karl Marx."

Initially a defender of physical force, Narayan was won over to Gandhi's position on nonviolence and advocated the use of satyagrahas to achieve the ideals of democratic socialism. Furthermore, he became deeply disillusioned with the practical experience of socialism in Nehru's India.

After independence and the death of Mahatma Gandhi, Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev and Basawon Singh (Sinha) led the CSP out of Congress to become the opposition Socialist Party, which later took the name Praja Socialist Party. Basawon Singh (Sinha) became the first leader of the opposition in the state and assembly of Bihar and Acharya Narendra Deva became the first leader of opposition in the state and assembly of U.P.

SARVODAYA

On April 19, 1954, Narayan announced in Gaya that he was dedicating his life (Jeevandan) to Vinoba Bhave's Sarvodaya movement and its Bhoodan campaign, which promoted distributing land to Harijans (untouchables). He gave up his land, set up an ashram in Hazaribagh, and worked towards uplifting the village.

In 1957, Narayan formally broke with the Praja Socialist Party in order to pursue lokniti [Polity of the people], as opposed to rajniti [Polity of the state]. By this time, Narayan had become convinced that lokniti should be non-partisan in order to build a consensus-based, classless, participatory democracy which he termed Sarvodaya. Narayan became an important figure in the India-wide network of Gandhian Sarvodaya workers.

In 1964, Narayan was vilified across the political spectrum for arguing in an article in the Hindustan Times that India had a responsibility to keep its promise to allow self-determination to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. He hit back at critics in a second article, dismissing the Indian version of the "domino theory" which held that the rest of India's states would disintegrate if Kashmir were allowed its promised freedom. In his graceful if old-fashioned style, Narayan ridiculed the premise that "the states of India are held together by force and not by the sentiment of a common nationality. It is an assumption that makes a mockery of the Indian Nation and a tyrant of the Indian State".

BIHAR MOVEMENT AND TOTAL REVOLUTION

Narayan returned to prominence in State politics in the late 1960s. In 1974, he led the student's movement in the state of Bihar which gradually developed into a popular people's movement

known as the Bihar movement. It was during this movement that JP gave a call for peaceful Total Revolution Together with V. M. Tarkunde, he founded the Citizens for Democracy in 1974 and the People's Union for Civil Liberties in 1976, both NGOs, to uphold and defend civil liberties.

EMERGENCY

When Indira Gandhi was found guilty of violating electoral laws by the Allahabad High Court, Narayan called for Indira to resign, and advocated a program of social transformation which he termed Sampoorna kraanthi [Total Revolution]. Instead she proclaimed a national Emergency on the midnight of June 25, 1975, immediately after Narayan had called for the PM's resignation and had asked the military and the police to disregard unconstitutional and immoral orders; JP, opposition leaders, and dissenting members of her own party (the 'Young Turks') were arrested on that day.

Narayan was kept as detenu at Chandigarh even after he had asked for a month's parole for mobilising relief in areas of Bihar gravely affected by flood. His health suddenly deteriorated on October 24, and he was released on November 12; diagnosis at Jaslok Hospital, Bombay, revealed kidney failure; he would be on dialysis for the rest of his life.

After Indira revoked the emergency on January 18, 1977 and announced elections, it was under JP's guidance that the Janata Party (a vehicle for the broad spectrum of the anti-Indira Gandhi opposition) was formed. The Janata Party was voted into power, and became the first non-Congress party to form a government at the Centre.

AN EVALUATION

Narayan spent the first 25 years of independence as the patron saint of lost causes: the Praja Socialist Party, the Sarvodaya movement, even self-determination for Kashmir. His most enduring contribution to the life of the Republic was the movement he led to unseat Mrs Gandhi, which provoked the Emergency. As the eminence grise of the Janata Party, the first non-Congress party to run the central government, he can take credit for

catalysing the political forces that set in train the Congress's political decline.

Narayan also wrote several books, notably Reconstruction of Indian Polity. He promoted Hindu revivalism, but was deeply critical of the form of revivalism promoted by the Sangh Parivar.

He died in October 1979; but a few months before that, in March 1979, his death was erroneously announced by the Indian prime minister to the parliament as he lay fighting for his life in Jaslok Hospital, causing a brief wave of national mourning, including the suspension of parliament and regular radio broadcasting, and closure of schools and shops. When he was told about the gaffe a few weeks later, he smiled.

In 1998, he was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, in recognition of his social work. Other awards include the Magsaysay award for Public Service in 1965.

Narayan is sometimes referred to with the honorific title Lok nayak or 'guide of the people'.

A university (J P University in Chhapra, Bihar) and two Hospitals (L N J P Hospital in New Delhi and Jai Prabha Hospital in Patna) have been opened in his memory. The capital's largest and best-equipped trauma centre, the Jai Prakash Narayan Apex Trauma Centre of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, also honors his contributions.

It is said when he was being taken away at dead of night on June 25, 1975, a bewildered Jayaprakash Narayan looked out of the windows of the police car, unable to understand why the somnolent city showed no signs of exploding in massive outrage at the blow that Indira Gandhi had dealt to democracy.

The story is probably apocryphal; but it might well be true. JP did not fail the people. The people failed him. Posterity will remember him -- if at all -- as the apostle of one more revolution that never was.

The faithful regard him as the best prime minister India never had. Like Mohandas Gandhi and Ram Manohar Lohia, he declined to seek or hold public office. Others saw him as an extra-constitutional centre of power like Sanjay Gandhi. The wits even

claimed there were three founts of authority during Morarji Desai's troubled prime ministership -- the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and Jaslok Sabha, the last named after the Mumbai hospital where JP spent much of his time.

He was heir to an ancient and formidable legacy. Bihar's Magadha heartland, where JP was born, "not only produced relentless fighters and exterminators of kings" but "hearkened at the same time to the devout teachings of Vardhamana Mahavira and Gautama Buddha". Magadha was the scene of the Buddha's enlightenment; Ajatsatru, who waged war on Buddhism, was born there.

JP's circuitous career did not betray this complex heritage. He penetrated beyond party dynamics to grasp, as few other leaders did, some of the causes of India's stagnation -- education was only "an escalator to reach the top", the middle class would always block systemic reform, an opposition victory alone would change nothing. But there was something of the gadfly in the man who combined the qualities of sage and strategist, who took the trodden path from communism to conservatism, who was quick to point out that it was illogical of Jawaharlal Nehru to expect capitalists to create his socialist elysium, but failed to recognise the dichotomy of his own crusade to reform society by destroying all its established institutions.

Like John Foster Dulles interrupting the full spate of Nehru's thunder against military pacts to ask why India did not join the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation, JP saw no contradiction in expecting the government to participate in his programme of "struggle and reconstruction, confrontation and cooperation".

Idealism ruled his life. He was an extreme nationalist by the time he was 14, taking cold water baths, wearing only a khadi dhoti and crude village-made sandals. Throwing away his school books, he refused to attend a British-style college in protest against the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. But the seven years (1922-29) that he spent in the US (where he soaked up Das Kapital) must have had a profound effect: the theories of Soviet conspiracy in India, especially in Mrs Gandhi's Congress, that he articulated might have come straight out of a Central Intelligence Agency primer.

Tested in the fires of British Indian jails where he spent eight years, and in conventional politics for nearly 30, he disagreed with the fundamentals of Nehru's Fabian constitutionalism, being convinced that the whole of India could never be governed from a single centre. His attempts to topple Nepal's absolutist oligarchy demonstrated that he had outgrown the Ohio University professor who had found him "aggressive in thought but not in action".

JP founded the Socialist Party in 1948 but took the crucial decision to renounce electoral politics six years later. This caused widespread dismay for many had hoped that he would become prime minister, blending Nehru's administrative and diplomatic skills with Gandhi's vision and commitment to the multitude. But realising the limitations of parliamentary democracy in India, JP joined Vinoba Bhave and spent the next 20 years "searching for some other way".

It was not a fruitful exercise. When Biju Patnaik invited him in 1973 to lead an all-India front as an alternative to the Congress, JP replied wisely that the initiative lacked a positive programme. The need was not a change of guard at the top but to fight oppression and the destruction of civil liberties; to solve the problems of unemployment and inflation; to revitalise planning and reform the electoral process.

But the mass movements of 1974-75 in Gujarat and Bihar were no more coherent and focused than Patnaik's Bharatiya Lok Dal, even if they brought down or paralysed state regimes. JP's own glimpse of the Holy Grail of a new India was not vouchsafed to the lusty crowds that chanted Sampoorna kranti ab naaraa hai, bhaavi itihas hamaara hai (total revolution is our slogan; future history belongs to us). Some of his followers were the lumpen proletariat, attracted as always by the prospect of pickings from turmoil. At another level, his movement bestowed respectability on Swatantra Party and Jana Sangh elements that had lost credibility. Few shared his perception of the governmental apparatus, reforming itself under external pressure.

That was not JP's fault. The knowledge of his own temperament that had prompted him to eschew politics in 1954 should have warned him against what was in effect backdoor entry into the same arena two decades later. It identified him with the narrow-

based forces that he had spurned earlier and enabled Mrs Gandhi to accuse him of being a tool in the hands of a khichri coalition whose one-point programme was her removal.

The Janata Party's squabbles were a reminder that she did not enjoy a monopoly of self-seeking intrigue. JP tried to make the best of things by nominating Morarji Desai to be prime minister, but this involvement in murky politicking was a far cry from the sampoorna kranti (total revolution) of his dreams.

JP's diagnosis of what is wrong with India remains as true in the new millennium as it was 40 years ago. But not his prescription. Judged on the touchstone of what he set out to do, his career can't be regarded a success. Nobody knew this better than JP himself. As he wrote in his prison diary, he tried "to bring about ever so little change in government policy" through conferences but the effort was wasted even in Nehru's time. "The leviathan went its own way." While a politician in office may not -- usually does not -- do anything for the country, a politician out of office can't. If he is of the stature of a JP, India sets him on a pedestal, and ignores his precepts. An effective way of neutralising inconvenient prophets.

JAYPRAKASH NARAYAN ON VINOBA BHAVE

During Gandhi's life Vinoba's name was not much known even in India. Today, however, the remotest villages resound with the words 'Vinoba' and Bhoodan. Even outside India, well-informed circles have sat up to take notice of the 'walking saint' and his land gift mission. Many thinkers in the West have seen in Vinoba's message a solvent for the war of ideologies that has become the despair of the human race.

Though he gave up college, Vinoba has remained a student all his life. Unlike Gandhi, he is an erudite Pandit of Sanskrit, Philosophy and religious literature of the world. He has studied the Koran in Arabic which language he learnt only to be able to read that holy book in the original. He knows the Bible and Christian religious literature as well perhaps as a Doctor of Divinity.

I shall not forget the occasion when the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, the leader of the Montgomery, Alabama, movement

of non-violent resistance to racial segregation, met Vinoba with his wife. Jim Bristol of the Quaker Centre, Delhi, it was, I think, who in introducing Mrs. King spoke of her proficiency in music and suggested that she might sing some hymns and Negro spirituals for Vinoba. Everyone was delighted at the suggestion. I looked at Vinoba and wondered if he knew what the Negro spirituals were. We were all startled, most of all the Americans, when Vinoba, as if in answer raised is ever downcast eyes towards Mrs. King and intoned softly, "Were you there, were you there, When they crucified my Lord?" When Mrs. King sang that spiritual, it had an added poignancy for us.

Vinoba is a linguist. Besides Sanskrit, Pali and Arabic, he knows English well, reads French, was recently learning German, and knows all the major Indian languages. He loved mathematics. His quest for knowledge is insatiable. But it is not knowledge as ordinarily understood. Most knowledge he regards as superficial and is interested in seeking after the fundamental truths of life. He has an uncanny capacity for separating the chaff form the grain and going to the root of the question. I have not met another person with a keen razor-like mind as Vinoba.

From the first day of contact Vinoba remained steadfast in his loyalty and devotion to his chosen master, though it would be doing an injustice to him to regard him as a disciple in ANY NARROW SENSE FO THE TERM. It was clear to those who came to know him even during Gandhi's life time that he possessed a mind and character, an originality and above all, a spiritual quality, that were destined to take him beyond the limits of a mere follower - no matter how brilliant - and make him a master in his own right. Those who have followed closely Vinoba's work and thought know how great have been his won experiments with truth and how significant his contributions to human thought. Particularly significant has been his development of the theory and practice of satyagraha beyond the stage where Gandhi left them.

Gandhi had vision of a new social order. A non-violent society based on love and human values, a decentralized, self-governing, non-exploitative, co-operative society. Gandhi gave that society the name of Sarvodaya - literally, the rise of all i.e. a society in which the good of all is achieved. Gandhi did not live to put his

concept into practice. Nothing was more natural than that the task should have devolved upon Vinoba.

..It must be said that it (bhoodan) is the first attempt in history to bring about a social revolution and reconstruction by the means of love. Vinoba is doing a path finding job in this field. The results of his experiment may have a far-reaching impact on a world that is so torn with hatred and charged with violence.

One final word about Vinoba is essential so that he may be truly understood. Vinoba is not a politician, nor a social reformer, nor a revolutionary. He is first and last a man of God. Service of man is to him nothing but an effort to unite with God. He endeavours every second to blot himself out, to make himself empty so that God may fill him up and make him his instrument.

The talks of such a man of self realization on one of the profoundest spiritual works of all times should be of inestimable value to all - irrespective of race, creed or nationality.

Looking back, it seems clear that he [Gandhi] had already begun to lay the foundations for his future course of action. But the significance of what he was doing was entirely lost upon me, as perhaps upon many others. In 1936 Jayaprakash Narayan (also known as J.P.) wrote, The answer will be found in the origins of unemployment under capitalism. What do we find there ? We find that production has been curtailed ruthlessly; factories are lying idle; credit is frozen; warehouses are glutted. At the same time we find people who are in dire need of all the things that are locked up in warehouses or wantonly destroyed by the State and the capitalists. On the one hand, there is said to be overproduction; on the other, an appalling underconsumption. Can there be anything more contradictory than this ? Yet it is one of the most persistent characteristics of capitalism. It is clear that in a world where the vast majority of people live in dire need there can be no overproduction. All that can be produced today, and a thousand times more, can be consumed without any difficulty. But, then, where is the rub ? The rub is in the fact that the poverty of the people , their lack of purchasing power, does not allow them to buy the goods that are lying idle or being dumped into the sea or thrown into the bonfire. The purchasing power of the great majority of the people in capitalist countries comes from the

wages they receive; and the latter are kept down as low as possible by the capitalists so that their profits may be the highest possible. Thus a vicious circle is drawn. The capitalist goes on manufacturing goods so that by selling them he may draw his profit, at the same time he restricts the consuming power of the community by his policy of wages. Naturally, there is maladjustment between production and consumption; and he periodically finds that he has produced ‘too much.

Then he restricts production and throws his workers out of employment. Now, it should be clear that if goods were produced for consumption and not for the profit of a few, all that was produced would be consumed. There would be no limit to the purchasing power of the people except the supply of good itself, because; wages would represent under those conditions the sum total of consumption goods produced. Overproduction would arise only when the needs of the community have been satisfied, and these, as I have already indicated, are almost insatiable. Restriction of production and de-mechanization would not be necessary till that point has been reached. (1) Narayan wrote in the depths of the world depression of the 1930s, and in the following pages other references will be made to it. However, there are always involuntarily unemployed people, many with unsatisfactory employment, a great deal of underutilized capacity, and many unmet needs that could be met if underutilized resources were mobilized to meet them. In what follows the depression of the 1930s is to be understood as a convenient and dramatic symbol standing for social arrangements that are always dysfunctional, even when there is no depression.

Narayan asserts that the cause of unemployment, which is an aspect of the larger problem of simultaneous overproduction and underconsumption, is the lack of purchasing power of the workers. The lack of purchasing power, in turn, is caused by exploitation. The workers are the producers, but the owners own the products of the workers’ alienated labor. The owners sell the products, and pay the workers who make them whatever the law of supply and demand compels them to pay, keeping the rest of the revenue for themselves. (Marx, following Ricardo and Smith, thought workers would get only enough to subsist on, but the

argument does not depend on whether wages are at a subsistence level or higher.) If, Narayan reasons, the producers were also the owners, so that their would be no deduction from their incomes to pay for what Paul Baran called the; permissive acts; performed by owners who charge for allowing the use of the assets they own, then worker purchasing power would be higher. There would be no underconsumption because workers would have more money to buy things. There would be no overproduction because everything that could be produced could be sold.

Narayan 1936 account of the cause and cure of simultaneous overproduction and underconsumption can be criticized from Marxian, Keynesian, and Gandhian viewpoints. Of the three, the Gandhian is the most fundamental. It is the one which brings into focus the basic structures of the modern world which are at the root of the causes, and which must be transformed to effect a cure.From a Marxist viewpoint it must be said, contrary to Narayan, that even when the means of production are owned by the producers, the proceeds from the sale of all the goods produced will not go to wages. Narayan allows for this by specifying that wages would equal only the sum total of consumption goods produced, recognizing that some goods are production goods which cannot directly be consumed, but only indirectly consumed through their role in augmenting future production.

The percentage of productive effort devoted to making consumption goods may be rather small if a Stalin or a Nehru is intent on major investments in heavy industry in order to industrialize a backward country rapidly. But whether or not consumption goods production is deliberately restricted to promote saving and investment, wages will not be equivalent to the sum total of consumption goods produced. There are several reasons why the workers will not receive as wages the equivalent of all they produce, even when the capitalists have been dispossessed and the workers are the owners. In 1875, when the German social democrats proposed that workers should be paid the undiminished proceeds of what they produced, Karl Marx explained that before the workers could be paid, there had to be deducted First, cover for the replacement of the means of production used up. Secondly, additional portion for expansion of production. Thirdly, reserve

or insurance fund to provide against mis-adventures, disturbances through natural events etc. These deductions from the undiminished proceeds of labour are an economic necessity, and their magnitude is to be determined by available means and forces, and partly by calculation of probabilities, but they are in no way calculable by equity.

After the above deductions, there are other, social, deductions: First, the general costs of administration not belonging to production. Secondly, that which is destined for the communal satisfaction of needs, such as schools, health services, etc.

Thirdly, funds for those unable to work etc. If, then, even when the producers own the means of production, the money the workers are paid still has a value less than what it would cost to purchase their products, then there is still a tendency toward simultaneous overproduction and underconsumption. This tendency might be reduced by purchases by those unable to work, as under capitalism it is reduced by purchases by the profit-making classes. Narayan in the passage quoted properly assumes that where the bulk of the people live on wages the purchases of the non-working classes will not be enough to stabilize the system.

The situation is not likely to be different when there are fewer non-workers. A socialist dictatorship might solve the problem by force. If there is enough surveillance and enough discipline, then people might be compelled to continue producing even where there are no willing buyers with enough money to buy their products. Or as Che Guevara proposed, people might be persuaded to engage in economic activity when it is not profitable or in their self-interest to do so by moral suasion. Or by some combination of force and moral suasion. If production does not depend on profit, or on people thinking it worth their while to work, but can instead by motivated by other motives including but not limited to fear of punishment then factories need not lie idle for lack of effective demand. Nor need the products lie in warehouses unused for want of buyers. They could be given away free, or they could be allotted through a rationing system in which money plays a reduced or even negligible role. In 1936 Narayan offered the Soviet Union as proof that his argument was true. He pointed out that all the capitalist countries were mired in the depths of the

Great Depression, in which idle hands, idle lands, and idle factories coexisted with unmet needs. Only the Soviet Union, he said, had full employment and a stable economy. He was not, by the way, quite right to single out the Soviet Union in this way, since there was also full employment and a stable economy in another country which disregarded the laws of capitalist economics and made the economy run with other motives, Hitler's Germany.

In any case, if the reflections made here are valid, the Soviet Union did not prove Narayan's point. The problem to be solved was harder than Narayan thought it was. If the Soviet Union solved it, it did not do so by making wages equal to the sum total of consumption goods produced. It had to use other means. After 1936, as credible evidence of atrocities poured in, Narayan gradually changed his mind about the Soviet Union. He ended up concluding not only that the Soviet experience represented a cure worse than the disease, but also that its evils were not simply due to sociopathic personalities like Stalin, but were inherent in its principles. The case of the Soviet Union does not demonstrate the validity of Narayan's 1936 solution to the problem of simultaneous overproduction and underconsumption. If it demonstrated a solution to the problem at all, it did not demonstrate a desirable one.John Maynard Keynes attributed the problem to a different set of causes. He proposed a different cure.

At a practical level, Keynes consciously sought an alternative to Marx. He wanted to find ways to stabilize an economy and to promote social justice (at least to a limited extent) without major changes in the ownership of the means of production. At a theoretical level, he did not need to add anything to the criticisms of Marxian theory that had already been written by others. Keynes was initiated into the profession in the heart of an economic orthodoxy that had already decided, beginning at the first publication of Capital and continuing forward from there, that Marxism was more metaphysics than science. His father John Nevile Keynes was a professor of economics; he studied economics at Cambridge under Alfred Marshall; he became editor of the Economic Journal, the leading British academic journal in the field. His theoretical concerns were those of a community of scholars that had already decided that Marx was wrong.Keynes

could take it to be assumed in his milieu that the sort of thing he was doing was more scientific than anything Marxists were doing. That put Gandhi two down. The passage I quoted at length above from Jayaprakash Narayan was taken from a chapter in Narayan's book Why Socialism? which was written as a refutation of Gandhi.

Narayan there argued that Gandhi's approach was merely ethical and religious, which was equivalent to saying that it did not provide valid explanations of the cause and effect relationships that determine what happens in the world. Narayan contrasts Marxism with Gandhian thought by claiming that Marx was scientific. Exhibit A of Narayan's proof that Marx was scientific and Gandhi was not is in the passage I quoted. Marx could explain simultaneous overproduction and underconsumption. Gandhi could not. Narayan attributed to Gandhi the naïve view that the cause of unemployment was machinery. The true cause, had been proven by Marx (according to Narayan) to be the exploitation of labor rooted in the private ownership of the means of production. If the weight of opinion of the majority of the economics profession, including Keynes, was that orthodox economics is more scientific than Marx, and if Marx is more scientific than Gandhi, that makes orthodox economics very much more scientific than Gandhi.

Gandhi was two down.For Keynes the context of finding a scientific explanation for the same great depression of the 1930s that Narayan explained in Marxist terms, was that of an economics profession that had long ago left Marx far behind, or at least thought it had. For Keynes, the lack of sufficient purchasing power to buy the products of industry, and the consequent idling of industry and laying off of workers even while needs were not being met, was not a problem defined in terms of what Marx would call relations of production. The problem was defined in terms of what Marx would call the level of circulation. According to the labor theory of value, as Marx applied it, the secret of profit-making (and also, according to Narayan, the secret of simultaneous overproduction and underconsumpton) could only be discovered by going deeper than the level of circulation to analyze the exploitation of labor at the level of the relations of production.

But for orthodox economists the law of supply and demand was science while the labor theory of value was not science. The

latter was metaphysical nonsense. The problem, for Keynes, was to explain why the law of supply and demand did not bring about a satisfactory equilibrium. The depression was an equilibrium of a sort. Prices were fixed at the levels people were willing and able to pay. The amount currently produced (disregarding unsold amounts left over from prior overproduction) was the amount the market effectively demanded. If more were produced it would not be sold; if prices went down it would not be worthwhile to produce as much and supply would decline; if prices went up people could not or would not pay the higher prices. In these respects the law of supply and demand was working just as it was supposed to work. But, as Narayan said, factories are lying idle; credit is frozen; warehouses are glutted.

At the same time we find people who are in dire need of all the things that are locked up in warehouses or wantonly destroyed by the State and the capitalists. On the one hand, there is said to be overproduction; on the other, an appalling underconsumption. According to Say's Law, supply produced its own demand. Therefore, if there was a supply of workers willing and able to work, then there must be a demand for them. Demand for investment capital was supposed to be a function of the price of money, that is to say of the interest rate. But in the depression interest rates went down to one percent, and sometimes neared zero percent, and still nobody wanted to take the risk of borrowing funds to put them to work to earn profits. The valiant efforts of classical economists to massage the data and tweak the theory to make them fit each other were in vain. Keynes took large notice of the fact that in any given society for any given period, total purchases must equal total sales.

This is an accounting identity. (I mention that it is an accounting identity partly in order to point out that economics is not always social physics; it does not always take concepts from mechanics like elasticity, equilibrium, and so on and postulate equivalents to them in the social world that can be treated with the same mathematical tools.) The accounting identity must be true because each exchange transaction is a purchase from one party’s point of view and a sale from the other party’s point of view. All the money spent is the same as all the money taken in

as receipts. (I think this general point holds up well enough when it is complicated by considering three party transactions, delivery of goods to be paid for at a later date, and so on)

But people do not in fact spend all they earn. Already, Alfred Marshall, Keynes teacher at Cambridge, had written in a critique of John Stuart Mill's version of the supposed law that supply creates its own demand: But though men have the power to purchase, they may not choose to use it.

For Keynes, when our income increases, our consumption increases also, but not by so much. The key to our practical problems is to be found in this psychological law. This analysis provides us with an explanation of the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty. For the mere existence of an insufficiency of effective demand, may, and often will, bring the increase of employment to a standstill before a level of full employment has been reached.

Because of the psychological law, as Keynes called it, that people prefer not to spend all they earn, there will always be a certain amount of savings, except perhaps in the extreme case where everybody is living from paycheck to paycheck This is a good thing if you want there to be funds available for investment. It is a good thing if you want people to postpone consumption and put their money in banks, and stocks, and bonds, and insurance, and corporate retained earnings, and government budget surpluses etc. in order to bring into play what Ludwig von Mises called round about methods of production.

Savings make possible a world where instead of living from hand to mouth people can enjoy the benefits of incomparably more efficient round about production methods, which can only be enjoyed after long lead times needed for research and development and/or long lead times needed for the installation of expensive equipment, such as, for example, dams, hydroelectric generators, long distance transmission lines, and the wiring for electricity of all the buildings in all the neighborhoods of a large city. But the inevitability of savings is not necessarily a good thing from the point of view of the accounting identity noted above. If business equals production for profit, and production for profit depends on sales, and every sale is somebody else's purchase, then it is not clear how business is supposed to continue from one

time period to another. If all the money spent is all the revenue, and if some of the revenue is set aside for savings, then there will be less money spent the next time around. And therefore less revenue.

All would be well is all the money saved were invested. Then all the money would be spent the second time around. It would not all be spent by consumers, but it would be spent by somebody; it would be spent by consumers and investors combined (leaving aside as not essential to the present point government spending and foreign trade). Keynes locates the problem in the tendency of investment to lag behind savings. Differing from Narayan’s focus on worker purchasing power, Keynes locates the problem in total purchasing power, also known as aggregate demand. If there is plenty of investment, then the circulation process can continue indefinitely, with their always being enough revenue in somebody's hands to carry on a steady stream of sales transactions producing for ever and ever steady streams of revenue.

This reasoning, this mindset, this institutional framework, lead to the growth imperative. Whatever other reasons a modern economy may have for wanting to grow, there is an accounting identity that compels it to grow. There has to be enough investment to sop up savings and thus ward off what is called a "downturn" where goods cannot be sold and workers cannot be employed. But investment only happens when investors rationally believe that at some future date they, or the enterprise they are investing in, will be the owners of some product that can be sold at a profit. Hence more and more products must be brought to market for the sake of the stability of the system, independently of the ethical or ecological reasons which may or may not justify bringing to market more products or bringing to market any particular product. The government can prohibit the production of products it might deem harmful, such as cigarettes or sports utility vehicles or pornography or violent television shows seen by children, but if it prohibits them it makes compliance with the growth imperative harder to achieve. Then some other profitable ways to invest capital must be found to make up for the prohibition against making money by means the legislature deems harmful.

Keynes and Keynesians have generally not been notably concerned with weeding out undesirable businesses. Keynes himself frankly admitted that the health of the economy required vice, not virtue. Their efforts have been devoted to keeping economies stable by using some combination of policy instruments to avoid overproduction. They advise governments to pump money into the system, or encourage others to pump money into the system, so that there will be enough purchasing power to avoid major gluts of unsold products and thus keep productive processes humming along at some reasonable more or less normal level. In his General Theory Keynes argued against his neo-classical colleagues that the low level equilibrium of the great depression was not a freak It was not something that was going to go away by itself. To make it go away governments and reasonable people in the private sector had to do something about it.

To stabilize the economy Keynes advocated a number of measures that defied the common sense of people brought up to believe that the purpose of business was to make money by producing some useful product or service, and that the measure of business success was the accountant's balance sheet. Deficit spending by the government in hard times is one of the most famous. He identifies the problem using a kind of reasoning that follows out what happens when account books are kept.

In important ways Keynes identifies the solution to the problem with being able to move beyond an accounting mentality. It is better to put people to work doing something useful than to leave them idle, regardless of what the bookkeepers say about it. Keynes asked people to see the physical and human realities that sometimes became invisible when the world was viewed through the conceptual lenses of accountancy: wrote, "carried to extravagant lengths the criterion of what one can call for short" the financial results as a test of the advisability of any course of action sponsored by private or by collective action.

The whole conduct of life was made into a sort of parody of an accountant's nightmare. Instead of using their vastly increased material wealth and technical resources to build a wonder city, the men of the nineteenth century built slums; and they thought it right and advisable to build slums because slums, on the test

of private enterprise, whereas the wonder city would, they thought, have been an act of foolish extravagance, which would, in the imbecile idiom of financial fashion, have mortgaged the future though how the construction to-day of great and glorious works to-day can impoverish the future, no man can see until his mind is beset by false analogies from an irrelevant accountancy.

Keynes located the problem of simultaneous overproduction and underconsumption at the level of circulation. His solution to the problem consisted of a series of policies designed to stimulate consumption and investment. He alleged that the real world results to be expected were more important than any paper losses that might have to be written off. Unlike Narayan's solution of the same date, Keynes' solution did not call for a change in the ownership of the means of production. Like Nehru, Keynes did not have the luxury of protecting himself from empirical refutation by clinging to a counterfactual argument that the world would have been better if his ideas had been applied, because to a large extent his ideas were applied. They were orthodox from the mid 1930s to the mid 1960s. Allthough some, like Gunnar Myrdal thought that the Keynesian revolution had changed economics forever, the general consensus is that mainstream economics has now reverted to something very like pre-Keynesian economics. The age of Keynes is over.

On a practical level, managing national economies with the tools of macroeconomics has proven to be impossible in the era of globalization, leaving in the lurch social democrats who used to favor Keynesian policies to bring about full employment, equity, and inclusion of the marginalized.

A.M. Huq is one of those who has pointed out that Gandhi had a better analysis than Keynesian ideas provides with respect to India's basic problem of massive rural poverty: he [Gandhi] had a better perception of the nature of massive rural unemployment than he is given credit for. That type of unemployment is structural, seasonal, and technological, rather than cyclical. Deficiency of aggregate demand has very little to do with that type of unemployment.

Gandhi's thought suggests an explanation of simultaneous overproduction and underconsumption that is in principle different

from those discussed so far, and also different from the explanation of unemployment Narayan attributed to Gandhi when he associated him with the view that unemployment is caused by machines. The explanation is that modern society is adharma. This comprehensive and somewhat flexible word, rich in connotations, can serve as an emblem of several aspects of Gandhi's thought and practice, which suggest creative ways to think about the problems Narayan posed in 1936 when he asked, Can there be anything more contradictory than this? Gandhi questions the constitutive principles of economic science laid down by Adam Smith, when he attributed the origins of its subject matter to the human propensity to truck or barter: Give me that which I want, and you shall have this which you want.

Gandhi questions Smith's confidence that he can find security in relying on the self-interest of the butcher, the brewer, and the baker to bring him his dinner. Much historical evidence shows that indeed Smith's confidence in the efficacy of self-interest is not a principle of general validity. In the depression of the 1930s it was in the self-interest of employers to lay off their employees. It was in the self-interest of bankers to foreclose on people's houses and farms. In Argentina in 2001 it was in the self-interest of entrepreneurs to abandon their enterprises, leaving the workers without work, the government without taxes, and consumers without products. One might regard such well known and frequently occurring situations where self-interest does not function to meet human needs as bugs in the system that can be corrected by redesigning institutions to harness self-interest more effectively. Or, like Gandhi, one might consider another alternative: that people ought, in principle and as a matter of duty, make themselves useful to their fellow human beings, and, indeed, to all life. Gandhi's solution to the problem of simultaneous overproduction and underconsumption is not a sentimental humanitarianism. It is not sentimental because it is about duty, not about feelings. It is not a humanitarianism because it is primarily about serving family and neighbors, not about trying to serve all of humanity at once.

Gandhi wrote, Pure service to one’s neighbors can never, from its very nature, result in disservice to those remotely situated. As with the individual, so with the universe, is an unfailing

principle, which we would do well to take to heart. Gandhi locates the problem not at the level of the legally constituted relations of ownership at the level of production, nor at the level of interruptions of the flow of money in the circuits of buying and selling, but at the level of personal morality and interpersonal relationships. Gandhi's viewpoint is, in principle, the most fundamental of the three, because production relations and circulation relations are subsets of interpersonal relations. Over the years, Jayaprakash Narayan came to see the paradox of poverty in a world where there could be enough for all more and more as Gandhi saw it. J.P. was never tempted by the theory that the supply of labor and the demand for labor would come to a satisfactory equilibrium if only the free market were left alone to work its magic. Nor was he ever tempted to believe that poverty could be abolished without making any changes in the ownership of the means of production. He came to believe, instead, in new values and ideas …so chosen that they have a direct bearing on some major social problem and their acceptance and practice are expected to lead to a solution of that problem and incidentally to a radical change in society.

His evolution away from Marx was an evolution from Marx to Gandhi, much to the delight of his wife Prabhavati, who had been a Gandhian all along. By 1959, Narayan was echoing what Gandhi had written in 1909: Modern industrialism and the sprit of economism that it has created, a spirit that weighs every human value on the scales of profit and loss and so-called economic progress, have disintegrated human society and made man an alien among his fellow men. Not only has the community been disintegrated, even the family is languishing in the West, and the mother, the woman, who was the centre and soul of the family, is losing her womanhood. The problem of present day civilization is social integration. Man is alone and bored, he is organization man he is man ordered about and manipulated by forces beyond his ken and control irrespective of whether it is a democracy or a dictatorship. The problem is to put man in touch with man, so that they may live together in meaningful, understandable, controllable relationships. In short, the problem is to recreate the human community. In Narayan's proposed socialist Gandhian grassroots communities, there can be no unemployment.

People follow the norms that prescribe their roles in families and communities in a spirit of service. Earning wages is not the purpose of working. Finding someone willing to pay for work is not the condition that must be met in order to start work. Cessation of pay is not an event that implies that one must stop work. This does not mean, as Gandhi, with whom Narayan presumably agrees, explained, that there can be no money changing hands. The primary and decisive motivation for work is a spirit of service, but money may be received, as well as other benefits, in association with service.An example is provided by the work of the Congress members who worked under Gandhi's leadership to organize the khadi movement that promoted the spinning of cloth by hand.

In order to qualify for a staff position people had to demonstrate so much commitment to the cause that they would work as volunteers even if they were not paid. Having joined the movement because they believed in it, some staff members (not the ones who had other incomes and did not need it) were supported by the movement.

Another example is discussed by Gunnar Myrdal in Asian Drama. Myrdal pointed out that even villagers who had become modernized to the extent that they took work for wages in cities, often chose to go back to the village some of the time to do agricultural work in order not to forfeit their traditional right as a member of an extended family to share in the harvest. They wanted to remain in good standing as community members lest their community membership lapse from disuse. In this system there is no unemployment within a kinship network because anybody who shows up and participates in the work also participates in the benefits of the work.

Myrdal had a low opinion of this system because more people were employed than were needed for the tasks done. If five people did work that three could have done just as well, then the extra two added nothing to the product. Society would have been better off if the extra two had been employed elsewhere doing something else. Gandhi too took large notice of the surplus of labor in Indian villages, and it was partly to put to work the labor power that was left over after all necessary agricultural tasks were done that he promoted hand spinning and other village crafts. Gandhi, like

Keynes, was concerned with what we may call social efficiency broadly defined as meeting a basket of desirable goals with the resources available. He was concerned with finding some honorable and respected work for everybody to do and with giving everybody a legitimate claim to receiving the necessities of life. Churches provide other examples. Churches usually have many volunteers and some paid staff. In between there are many people who perform many roles which they would never perform if they were motivated just by market incentives and/or which they would never be assigned if the purpose were to make a profit by employing them. They are supported in various ways and to various degrees by the community of the faithful and by endowment income.Examples could be multiplied indefinitely. Parents often have the social role of taking care of children, and children often have the social role of taking care of aging parents, where the primary motivation for the work is service, but the workers are supported and helped by other family members, and sometimes also by non-profit or governmental institutions such as child care centers, hospitals, and schools. In every walk of life, in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, there are people who feel called to a vocation, and there are organizations that write mission statements declaring pro-social goals.

The transition from a money-dominated economy to one where dharma is taken more seriously than it is now, is not a brusque shift from one single model to another single model. It is gradual sarvodaya, moral awakening. To the extent that a spirit of service and social responsibility pervades society, unemployment becomes a non-concept, because there is always something to do, and there is always somewhere to turn in time of need.In Narayan’s proposed socialist Gandhian grassroots communities there would, in principle, be very little overproduction. The problem is solved by redefining its terms; by taking its analysis to a deeper level where the very categories of economic analysis, which are the institutional framework of modernity, are reconsidered. This, I think, is what J.P. meant by his rather confusing slogan, "Total Revolution".

It does not mean destroying everything and starting over; quite to the contrary, it is a constructive process. It means

reconsidering every aspect of life, and constantly striving to improve life in all its aspects. Overproduction, by definition, means the production of goods that are not sold, which remain unsold because there are no willing buyers for them. It is a problem that dissolves for the most part when selling ceases to be the be-all and end-all of production. For classical economics, before it was, in Paul Sweezey's words, freed from the tyranny of Say's Law by John Maynard Keynes, overproduction meant that the producers had produced the wrong things. They should have made something else. Instead of making what consumers wanted, they had blundered and made something consumers did not want, or made too much of something because although consumers did want that thing they did not want that much of it. If the market were left alone, producers would of their own accord re-allocate resources in response to price signals. Overproduction would go away as supply and demand came into equilibrium.

Keynes made clear in theory what had always been clear in practice. The inability to sell something often meant not that people did not want it and need it, but that people did not have the money to buy it. Traditional thinking provides a solution to the problem encountered by someone who has produced something that cannot be sold, which is needed by people who cannot afford to buy it. Give it away. There is an example in the bagel shop where I write part of this. Every evening at closing hour the unsold bagels are put into a large bag. A little old hispanic lady in tennis shoes arrives and takes the bag of unsold bagels to the Salvation Army. She does not speak much English and she does not have a car. But she does not need to know English to know that God wants her to move the bag from the bakery to the mission. God speaks to her in Spanish, as God speaks to the masses of India in their many languages and dialects.

She does not need the aid of modern automotive technology, and she does not need wages, to accomplish her task. Whether the baker’s act in giving the bagels, the lady's work in moving them, or the eating of the bagels by the homeless people at the shelter is reflected somewhere in books of account or economic statistics I do not know. I do know that it happens every day.The Government of India, in several recent years, has had a

larger problem. Instead of a sack of unsold bagels, the government has millions of metric tons of grains stored in warehouses. The government is afraid to give it away, because the availability of so much free food would depress prices. Lower prices would depress production. They might throw India, which has slowly and laboriously achieved food self-sufficiency, back into dependence on imports. In some cases the depressed prices would throw farmers, who have been slowly and laboriously climbing out of poverty, back into poverty.

In Narayan's proposed socialist Gandhian grassroots communities, the Government of India's problem would not arise. There would be no accumulation of power, or of grain, at the Centre. Decision-making and grain surpluses would be widely dispersed in thousands of villages. What to do with the grain would be rationally decided by ethical people no wonder they called J.P. a dreamer in ways that would keep going both ecologically sound production processes and fair distribution that met everyone's needs, including shipping grain to other areas that might have a shortage. Instead of the quasimechanics of supply curves intersecting demand curves, and instead of business people making decisions with what Keynes optimistically called “irrelevant accountancy there would be what Cyert and March called satisficing.

In other words (explaining satisficing), the decision-makers would find a satisfactory solution to the problems that would solve everybody's problems to some reasonable degree and leave nobody abandoned, rather than trying to maximize profit, and, indeed, rather than trying to maximize any single variable (except perhaps a composite variable that might be constructed as a measure of satisfying many different needs, interests, social goals and ecological goals). The self-governing local community would solve the problem of how to distribute the unsold product without depressing production by talking about it together. The local community would be aware of the several interests that need to be synthesized. It would have the wisdom that comes from what Clifford Geertz calls local knowledge.

As Gandhi wrote, when you concentrate production in particular areas, then,you would have to go in a round-about way

to regulate distribution, whereas, if there is production and distribution both in the respective areas where things are required, it is automatically regulated, and there is less chance for fraud, none for speculation. I think automatically was not quite the word Gandhi was looking for, and that what he meant was matching production to distribution would be easily regulated by the local people. For the same reasons, the local communities would contribute in practice to solving a problem Keynes did not need to solve in theory, because the classical economists had already solved it: how to avoid the technical blunder of making what is not needed instead of making what is needed. The modern world is beset by the constant failure to materialize of the economists; utopia of competition among producers, no single one of whom is large enough to set prices, leading to a social maximum.

The economists utopia's failure to materialize leads to numerous attempts to correct the failings of in-practice-non-ideal markets through the technocratic workings of large governmental bureaucracies, and those of private and hybrid bureaucracies. Anybody can tell a dozen stories of such bureaucracies making the sorts of dumb mistakes which tend to show that the bureaucratic cure is worse than the market disease: like ordering the production of two hundred thousand rear wheels for bicycles, and only one hundred thousand front wheels for bicycles. Critics of the Soviet Union made lists of such mistakes, and pointed out that they would never have happened in a market economy. In India some of the dumb mistakes of large bureaucracies have been in mega-dam projects, as will be discussed further in the chapter on Vandana Shiva.J.P.'s Gandhian proposals are anti-statist and anti-bureaucratic.

They entrust decision-making to people who are on the front lines, on the ground, who know the exact details of each small problem. J.P.'s solution to the problem of how to organize social cooperation is in its own way similar to the market solution advocated by Adam Smith and his Austrian followers von Hayek and von Mises. J.P. offers another solution to the problems of allocation and re-allocation of resources that in orthodox economics price signals are supposed to solve. Smith's famous example was the pin. No high-level bureaucrat with a general overview of the

whole problem knows how to make a pin. And yet pins get made, in production processes organized by markets, because each participant in the complex social process of pin making has learned from experience how to carry out her or his specialized task.

J.P.s proposed version of participatory democracy corrects the insightful but exaggerated faith of Adam Smith in the market in a different way than statist bureaucracy a way I will not try to summarize in a phrase because it has many facets, being, as J.P's admirer Bimal Prasad says, a synthesis of Marxist, Gandhian, and Western Democratic ideals. J.P's solution does not eliminate the possibility of overproduction altogether. Overproduction does not become a non-concept as unemployment does. Mistakes and injustices might still happen. But under J.P's proposed Gandhian decentralism there will be less overproduction because the conceptual frame of reference within which production is harmonized with meeting needs is more comprehensive. There are more options to choose from because the institutional framework is reconsidered.

The simplified ethics of modernity is re-complicated again as flesh and blood people with all their foibles and failings work within institutional frameworks they are constantly re-inventing to wrest a decent living for all in the face of the physical realities of their bio-region. The difficult problem of distributing products fairly without depressing prices and discouraging producers remains. It is more likely to be solved because it is broken down into many specific local problems, in which more people's wisdom contributes to the search for solutions. It is addressed with the wisdom and the good will (Narayan's optimism again!) of people with on-the-ground detailed knowledge of each situation. Needless to say, also, when more people a solution because of having contributed to planning it, that solution is more likely to be implemented.

Gandhi, and Narayan following Gandhi, suggest an idea which provides in principle also a solution to underconsumption, to poverty, even though neither expressed the idea explicitly, or at least not explicitly using exactly the words I shall use. The idea is unconditional love. The cause of poverty in the midst of plenty is not precisely in the ownership of the means of production. It

is in conditionality. It is in the fact that owners only employ the means of production they own to produce things people need when it is profitable for them to do so. The condition is the check. Unless they can truck and barter, giving this which they have in exchange for that which they want, they sit on their property and exclude others from it as trespassers, rather than putting it to use. Nor is the cause of poverty precisely the lack of aggregate demand that keeps factories and workers idle. It is the condition that is the fundamental check.

Demand only counts as effective demand when people have money to pay, because the condition without which providers will not provide them with what they need is that they must give money in exchange. The fundamental problem is neither at the level of production relations nor at the level of circulation relations, but at the level of the constitutive rules of modern society. Workers do not work, and owners do not invest, unless there is compliance with the condition that they get money for their work, or for their granting permission to use their property. Although Gandhi never spoke of eliminating conditionality, he came close, and he clearly implied the idea. He wrote, for example:

The worker will not only be spinning regularly, but will be working for his bread with the adze or the spade or the last, as the case may be. All his hours minus the eight hours of sleep and rest will be fully occupied with some work. He will have no time to waste. He will allow himself no idleness and allow others none. His life will be a constant lesson to his neighbors in ceaseless and joy-giving industry. Bodily sustenance should come from bodily labour, and intellectual labour is necessary for the culture of the mind. Division of labour there will necessarily be, but it will be a division into various species of bodily labour and not a division into intellectual labour to be confined to another class. Our compulsory or voluntary idleness has to go. If it does not go, no panacea will be of any avail, and semi-starvation will remain the eternal problem that it is.

He who eats two grains must produce four. Unless the law is accepted as universal, no amount of reduction in population would serve to solve the problem. If the law is accepted and observed, we have room enough to accommodate millions more

to come. In one of many passages where Gandhi assured his readers that he was not against technology, just in favor of what J.P's friend E.F. Schumacher later came to call intermediate or appropriate technology, Gandhi wrote: I am socialist enough to say such factories [one for making Singer sewing machines] should be nationalised, or State-controlled. They ought only to be working under the most attractive and ideal conditions, not for profit, but for the benefit of humanity, love taking the place of greed as a motive. It is an alteration in the conditions of labour that I want.

This mad rush for wealth must cease, and the labourer must be assured, not only of a living wage, but a daily task that is not a mere drudgery. The machine will, under these conditions, be as much a help to man working it as to the state, or to the man who owns it. The present mad rush will cease and the labourer will work (as I have said) under attractive and ideal conditions. This is but one of the exceptions [to being against machinery] I have in mind. The sewing machine has love at its back. The individual is the one supreme consideration. The saving of labour of the individual should be the object, and honest humanitarian considerations, and not greed, the motive.

If all the people on earth, freed from the check of conditionality, made their best effort to utilize their talent and treasure for the common good, then there would be no poverty, except insofar as nature made poverty inevitable, and except insofar as lack of knowledge on how best to use resources produced mistakes. This hypothetical state, characterized by much more good will than there is now, need not be one in which there would be no markets. Even the pure in heart whose only desires are to serve God, neighbor, and biosphere (not to mention the less pure in heart who are capable of the relative nonviolence, decency, and efficiency elicited by market transactions, but not of altruism) may be grateful for price signals telling them what is wanted when, where, and how much. This hypothetical state of good will and accurate knowledge, which I will imagine as employing accountable markets to do the things markets are good at, sets a standard by which less desirable states can be measured.

There would be no poverty if everyone did the right thing. There would be less poverty if more people did the right thing.

These things would be true as long as people did the right things, i.e. those things that meet human needs and preserve the environment, regardless of what motives they might have for doing them, and regardless of what beliefs they might hold. Unconditional service to others is a perfect standard relevant to an imperfect world.Gandhi did not use the language of unconditional and conditional.

He wrote sometimes of the law of dharma, sometimes of the law of love, and sometimes of the law of nonviolence, or ahimsa. The three are synonyms in that they all prescribe unselfishly using right means to attain right ends. Dharma has the drawback that it is identified with tradition. It needs to be corrected with reminders that duty today might not be the same as duty yesterday, and even that duty yesterday might have been wrong even then but the people back then, or some of them, did not know it.

Love has the drawback that it sounds sentimental. It needs to be corrected with reminders that one ought to do the right thing whether or not one feels like it. Nonviolence has the drawback that it brings to mind as its supposed opposite physical and emotional violence, more than what Johan Galtung christened structural violence, such as the violence of the jurisprudence that excludes millions from the benefits of property ownership, and the violence of economic institutions that leave in penury whoever has no marketable commodity to sell.J.P's nonviolent campaigns of the 1970s featured the slogan total revolution. That slogan tended to be identified in the public mind with J.P's call for the resignation of the government of Bihar, his native state, and with the larger project of bringing down the government of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

But I think total revolution is better understood as a consistent effort to put into practice Gandhian ideals, as interpreted and modified by J.P. The revolution had to be total; because it affected everything, both ends and means, and because it would never be over. Existing institutions will always be judged as failures in the light of what in principle they could be.J.P. came to believe that social transformation could not be achieved by government action, certainly not by the actions of central governments in a country as vast as India. In his Marxist days he had written that they key

to socialism was state power. Once in control of the police and the army, the socialists could change the economy by legislation and by coercion. Later, as a Gandhian, he came to believe that social change had to begin at the grassroots, or as his friend Minoo Masani said, at the rice-roots. There had to be a transformation of civil society, by civil society, for civil society.

J.P. resigned from the socialist party he had founded, and joined Vinoba Bhave’s sarvodaya movement. (He could not join Gandhi because Gandhi was already dead by the time Narayan was finally won over by his ideas.) J.P. had several opportunities to become Prime Minister of India. He declined them each time. He declined not from personal humility but from theoretical consistency. He believed that governments could not bring about the needed changes Sarvodaya could. However, in his last years he had some third thoughts, tending to see the need for complementary government action and grassroots work. As it turned out, the Bhoodan sarvodaya movement led by Vinoba Bhave, and followed by Jayaprakash Narayan, succeeded to a limited extent, but it did not transform the system. It collided with what is called economic reality. Its main effort was to facilitate the self-organization of Gandhian villages on donated land.

Landlords pledged in public meetings to donate some of their land, but when it came time to hand it over many of them balked and refused to sign the transfer deeds. Gandhi himself had collided with another aspect of economic reality in his efforts to promote the spinning of khadi cloth in the 1930s. No matter how hard he tried to secure a living wage for the spinners, he could not succeed because the people buying the cloth were themselves living at so low a level that they could not pay enough even if they wanted to to provide a living wage for the spinners.If the thesis of this book is correct, then Gandhi, if we imagine him smiling down from heaven on those of us still struggling on this earth, can still speak to us with the counterfactual luxury of saying that the world would be better if his philosophy were more widely practiced. In picturing him smiling down at us, urging us to follow his lead, I do not picture him as trying to justify everything he said, wrote, or did, which in any event he could not do because he contradicted himself so often. I do not picture him as proposing

another school of economics. Rather, he advocated a traditional ethical framework by whose standards the work of economists of all schools can be evaluated. His ethical framework has not been tested and disproved just because some experiments failed. The limited success of the Bhoodan sarvodaya movement that J.P. joined, need not lead one to see the JP movement as yet another form of Indian populism, and his ideas as a subspecies of that latter-day Gandhism which promises much, but delivers little or nothing except a constantly reiterated and impotent moral outrage at the many iniquities of modern India.

Instead, one can take the failures of Gandhism so far as evidence that both it and the economic realities with which it has collided require further examination. Ali is a contemporary intellectual who was born in India and spent his childhood there, although the city he came from later became part of Pakistan.* Jayaprakash Narayan, letter of resignation from the Praja Socialist Party. 1957, reprinted as Chapter 18 of Bimal Prasad (ed.) A Revolutionary's Quest, Selected Writings of Jayaprakash Narayan. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980. p. 196. Jayaprakash Narayan, in chapter 3 of Why Socialism?, as extracted in Bimal Prasad (ed), A Revolutionary’s Quest: Selected Writings of Jayaprakash Narayan. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1980. pp. 49-50. This work is hereafter cited as Selected Writings. I have corrected a misprint where “are” should have been I will sometimes refer in the singular to the inter-related set of problems Narayan poses as the problem even though in another context I might use the plural and make a list of what the separate problems are. I do not share the bias of those who consider it to be always or nearly always more scientific to speak of a series of distinct problems.

I agree with those who see capitalism as having a central contradiction, which can be named as the contradiction between the accumulation of profits and the production of use values. It creates obstacles to solving many problems. Hence one can also speak of a single problem containing sub-problems, inasmuch as each sub-problem is exacerbated and partly caused by the same central contradiction. Karl Marx, Critique of the Gotha Programme. New York: International Publishers, 1938. p. 7.

See Peter Drucker's study of Hitler’s economy, The End of Economic Man. Drucker explains in detail how Nazi Germany was not run on the basis of investment for profit, but nevertheless was made to run by enlisting other motives. Hitler demonstrated that an economically successful alternative to capitalism is possible, although he did not demonstrate a desirable alternative to it. Peter Drucker, The End of Economic Man.. New York: John Day, 1939.

Amritananda Das has argued that a Gandhian economy must appeal to nationalism, which is perhaps neither the best nor the worst of human motives. Foundations of Gandhian Economics. Delhi: Center for the Study of Developing Societies, 1979. p. 72. Das thinks historical experience shows that a desire to benefit the poor is not a strong enough motivation for the sacrifices necessary to secure the benefit of the poor. Alfred Marshall, quoted by John Maynard Keynes, in The General Theory of Employment Interest and Money. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1936. footnote 2 on page 19. Keynes, General Theory pp. 29-30 and 30-31. John Maynard Keynes, National Self Sufficiency, The Yale Review June, 1933, p. 765.(6B) The marriage between interests and values that liberalism neatly underwrote in the nineteenth century, with its simple but elegant view of the world, is in the process of being repeated a process perhaps embraced with more fervour in Britain than anywhere else.Will Hutton, The Revolution That Never Was: an assessment of Keynesian economics. London: Longman, 1986. p. 15. In the middle 1940s, the Keynesians felt superior and triumphant. During the 1950s they were mostly losing their confidence.

In 1963 I thought that the clear academic retreat from Keynesianism had already been accompanied by a retreat in policy. William H. Hutt, The Keynesian Episode. Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1979. p. 415, p. 419; Sheila Dow and John Hillard (eds.), Keynes, Uncertainty, and the Global Economy (Beyond Keynes, Volume Two). Cheltenham UK: Edward Elgar, 2002; e.g. Mark Latham, Civilising Global Capital: new thinking for Australian Labor. Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1998; Robert Reich, The Work of Nations. London: Simon and Schuster, 1991. A.M. Huq, Welfare Criteria in Gandhian Economics,” in Romesh Diwan and

Mark Lutz (eds.) Essays in Gandhian Economics. Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1985. p. 68.) Although developing nations after World War II generally accepted the idea of macroeconomic planning of a more or less Keynesian sort, they often did not accept the idea that in poor country contexts Keynes’ concept of effective demand being an obstacle to growth was valid. See Amartya Sen, Employment, Technology and Development. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999. Gandhi, Young India, June 18, 1931. The resignation letter cited in the first footnote above, p. 205. The gradual shift of Narayan’s thought from Marx to Gandhi is recounted by his close friend Minoo Masani in Minoo Masani, Is J.P. the Answer? Delhi:

Macmillan, 1975. pp. 10-33. Jayaprakash Narayan, "A Plea for Reconstruction of the Indian Polity" in Selected Writings pp. 218-219. Narayan gives an explanation of the meaning of dharma: "The concept of dharma was of great importance in ancient India. It prescribed and regulated individual and group behavior in all walks of life.

This concept of dharma and its role in Indian polity and the wider life of society is another example of that synthetic, organic, communal organization of Indian society which has been discussed above. Communities, territorial or functional, had developed laws and codes of behavior to regulate the internal life of their communities and groups and their relations with the rest of society. There were in addition codes and laws that were common to and excepted by all of them that made up the universal social ethics. The ensemble of these social ethics exercised a powerful influence over the State.Selected Writings p. 217. Those who are engaged in this voluntary organization not only derive no pecuniary advantage from it but are expected, if they can, to give their labour free of any hire. M.K. Gandhi, Economics of Khadi. Ahmedabad: Navajivan Press, 1941. p. 542. J.P. explains his concept of total revolution in Selected Writings pp. 369-371.

There are four aspects for the work for total revolution: struggle, construction, propaganda, and organization. In the present situation we should concentrate on the constructive aspect. Total revolution is permanent revolution. It will always go on and keep changing both our personal and social lives.

2

Jayaprakash Narayan: Keeper of India's Conscience

He realised that Gandhiji's success in the freedom struggle had showed that it was possible to bring about change without sacrificing one's values.

Jayaprakash Narayan was born on October 11, 1902, in Sitabdiara, a village on the border of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. His father Harsudayal was a junior official in the Canal Department of the State government and was often touring the region. Jayaprakash, called Baul affectionately, was left with his grandmother to study in Sitabdiara. Since there was no high school in the village, Jayaprakash was sent to Patna to study in the Collegiate School.

While in school, Jayaprakash read magazines like Saraswati, Prabha and Pratap, books like Bharat- Bharati, and poems by Maithilsharan Gupta and Bharatendu Harishchandra which described the courage and valour of the Rajput kings. Jayaprakash also read the Bhagwad Gita. He excelled in school. His essay, "The present state of Hindi in Bihar" won a best essay award. He joined the Patna College on a government scholarship.

Jayaprakash was married to Prabhavati, daughter of lawyer and nationalist Brij Kishore Prasad in October 1920. Prabhavati was very independent-minded and on Gandhiji's invitation, went to stay at his ashram while Jayaprakash continued his studies.

Jayaprakash, along with some friends, went to listen to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad speak about the Non-cooperation movement launched by Gandhiji against the passing of the Rowlatt

Act of 1919. The Maulana was a brilliant orator and his call to give up English education was "like leaves before a storm: Jayaprakash was swept away and momentarily lifted up to the skies. That brief experience of soaring up with the winds of a great idea left imprints on his inner being." Jayaprakash took the Maulana's words to heart and left Patna College with just 20 days remaining for his examinations. He joined the Bihar Vidyapeeth, a college run by the Congress.

HIGHER STUDIES IN THE USA

After exhausting the courses at the Vidyapeeth, Jayaprakash decided to go to America to pursue his studies. At age 20, Jayaprakash sailed aboard the cargo ship Janus while Prabhavati remained at Sabarmati. Jayaprakash reached California on October 8, 1922 and gained admission to Berkeley in January 1923. To pay for his education, Jayaprakash picked grapes, set them out to dry, packed fruits at a canning factory, washed dishes, worked as a mechanic at a garage and at a slaughter house, sold lotions and accepted teaching jobs. All these jobs gave Jayaprakash an insight regarding the difficulties the working class faced.

Jayaprakash was forced to transfer to Iowa State when fees at Berkeley were doubled. He was forced to transfer to many universities thereafter. He pursued his favourite subject, Sociology and received much help from Professor Edward Ross, the father of Sociology.

In Wisconsin, Jayaprakash was introduced to Karl Marx's "Das Capital". News of the success of the Russian revolution of 1917 made Jayaprakash conclude that Marxism was the way to alleviate the suffering masses. He delved into books by Indian intellectual and Communist theoretician M.N. Roy. His paper on Sociology, "Social Variation", was declared as the best of the year.

Return to India

Jayaprakash had to cut his doctorate short when news came that his mother was seriously ill. Jayaprakash returned to India in November 1929, "a mature young man with an enquiring mind, original in his thinking, and with the fierce, idealistic desire to devote himself to serve society." For Jayaprakash it was not enough

that the nation attain political freedom. To him, the definition of freedom was freedom from hunger, poverty and ignorance.

Congress Socialist

While Jayaprakash became a believer of the Communist school of thought, Prabhavati became an ardent Gandhian. He respected Prabhavati's choice and did not force her to change her views. In 1929, both Jayaprakash and Prabhavati left for the Congress session at Lahore under Jawaharlal Nehru's presidentship. There Nehru invited Jayaprakash to join the Congress, an offer that Jayaprakash gladly accepted. He began work in the Labour Research Cell of the Congress at Allahabad.

Following the 1930 'Dandi March', most of the top Congress leaders were arrested. Jayaprakash immediately set up an underground office at Bombay to continue Congress work. He travelled all over the nation, printing, distributing and organizing secret meetings. After an underground meeting of the Congress Working Committee in Banaras, Jayaprakash went to Madras where he was arrested. The next day the newspaper headlines screamed, "Congress Brain Arrested!"

In British Jails

In the Nasik jail, Jayaprakash had the opportunity to meet thinkers like Ram Manohar Lohia, Asoka Mehta, Minoo Masani, P. Dantwala and Achyut Patwardhan. All of them were impatient for freedom and agreed to steer the Congress towards the goal of Socialism. Jayaprakash was released from jail in 1933.

In 1934, Jayaprakash and his friends formed the Congress Socialist Party under the Presidentship of Acharya Narendra Deva and Secretaryship of Jayaprakash himself. The group intended to function as the Socialist wing within the Congress party and aimed to make socialism the goal of the Congress. In a book "Why Socialism?" (1932), Jayaprakash explained why socialism would be right for India. He was adored by the youth for his idealism.

Jayaprakash was arrested for speaking against Indian participation in the Second World War in February 1940 and sent to Deoli detention camp in Rajasthan. Jayaprakash was appalled at the conditions in Deoli. He organized a hunger strike to protest

the conditions in 1941. The Government immediately released him. He was again arrested in 1942 for participating in the Quit India movement. In November 1942, Diwali night, Jayaprakash along with five others escaped the prison by scaling a 17 feet high wall while the guards remained distracted by the festivities. A Rs.10,000 reward was offered for Jayaprakash's capture, dead or alive. Jayaprakash escaped to Nepal and organized a guerilla army called the "Azad Dasta".

Jayaprakash and Ram Manohar Lohia were captured briefly but were rescued by the Azad Dasta members, who set fire to a hut to distract the guards. Both freedom fighters escaped to Bihar. Finally the British closed in on Jayaprakash in Amritsar when he was on his way to Rawalpindi to meet Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. Jayaprakash was taken to Lahore Fort, notorious as a "Torture chamber" on September 18, 1943. 16 months of mental and physical torture followed. Jayaprakash was put in solitary confinement for the first month. Then came interrogations, physical torture and humiliation. Jayaprakash was released from jail on April 12, 1946.

Jayaprakash returned to a nation he could barely recognize. Talk of partition and riots between Hindu and Muslims dominated the atmosphere. Jayaprakash rushed to Bihar to assist in curbing the riots. He pleaded with the Congress Working Committee not to accept the partition plan.

FROM MARX TO GANDHI

Independence finally came on August 15, 1947. Within a year Gandhiji was assassinated. Prabhavati hid her sorrow behind the spinning wheel, but Jayaprakash's mind "churned (with) grief and horror." He began to see the wisdom in Gandhiji's insistence on truth and non-violence.

The Socialists led by JP lost to the Congress in the 1952 elections. Nehru invited Jayaprakash to join the Cabinet. When Nehru could give no assurances on the implementation of Jayaprakash's 14 point plan to reform the Constitution, the Administration and Judicial system, nationalize the banks, redistribute land to the landless, revive Swadeshi, and setup cooperatives, Jayaprakash refused the offer. Jayaprakash turned his attention to the trade unions he was President of. He, along with the unions was able

to get a minimum wage, pension, medical relief and housing subsidy introduced. At the same time, Jayaprakash was keenly watching events in Russia. The bloody purges and imprisonment convinced Jayaprakash that communism was not for India. He realized that Gandhiji's success in the freedom struggle had showed that it was possible to bring about change without sacrificing one's values.

Sarvodaya Leader

On April 19, 1954, at a meeting in Gaya, Jayaprakash made the dramatic announcement of dedicating his life (jeewan daan) to Vinoba Bhave's Sarvodaya movement. He renounced all self-interest, gave up his land in Sitabdiara, and withdrew from all personal activity to devote the rest of his life to the movement. Prabhavati was delighted at this declaration. Jayaprakash set up an ashram at Hazaribagh, a poor and backward village. He gave Gandhian concepts a new dimension by using modern technology to uplift the village.

Jayaprakash believed that every village should be like a small republic - politically independent and capable of taking its own decisions. It was a marriage of Gandhian-Indian concepts and modern Western democracy. His thoughful, well-researched and brilliant book, "The Reconstruction of Indian Polity," won him the Ramon Magsaysay Award.

Taming the Naxals

In June 1971, Sarvodaya workers in Muzaffarpur, Bihar, received a letter threatening to kill them. The area was continuously threatened by Naxalites, which was made up of young men. Jayaprakash walked into the heart of Naxal territory armed only with love and sympathy. He knew that the cause of the violence was that the youth were frustrated because of poverty and unemployment. He lived in Musahari block for many months and experimented to alleviate the problems of the Naxals. Jayaprakash was also a key person in acquiring the surrender of dacoits in the Chambal Valley.

On April 15, 1973, Prabhavati died of cancer, leaving Jayaprakash alone.

Call for Total Revolution

1974 ushered in a year of high inflation, unemployment and lack of supplies and essential commodities. Jayaprakash was asked to lead a peaceful agitation by the Navanirman Andolan of Gujarat. On April 8, 1974, at the age of 72, he led a silent procession at Patna. The procession was lathi charged. On June 5, 1974, Jayaprakash addressed a mammoth crowd at Gandhi Maidan in Patna. He declared, "This is a revolution, friends! We are not here merely to see the Vidhan Sabha dissolved. That is only one milestone on our journey. But we have a long way to go... After 27 years of freedom, people of this country are wracked by hunger, rising prices, corruption... oppressed by every kind of injustice... it is a Total Revolution we want, nothing less!"

In Indira's Jail

On June 12, 1975, the Allahabad High Court held the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, guilty on charges of corrupt practice in her election. Jayaprakash advised her to resign until her name was cleared by the Supreme Court. Instead, she clamped Emergency on June 26. Jayaprakash was arrested and sent to Chandigarh where he was kept prisoner in a hospital. "My world lies in shambles around me," he cried. As his health worsened, he was moved to a hospital in Bombay.

Finally in January 1977, the Emergency was lifted. Fresh elections were declared. Under Jayaprakash's guidance several parties united to form the Janata Party. The party incorporated all of Jayaprakash's goals in its manifesto.

Jayaprakash was weak and helpless by that time. He felt his work was done, but he had to sorrowfully witness the collapse of the Janata Party government. Jayaprakash died on October 8, 1979. People hailed him as "Loknayak" or leader of the people.

J.P.: India's Aging Revolutionary

When Prime Minister Indira Gandhi put the name of Jayaprakash Narayan, 72, at the head of her list of political opponents to be arrested two weeks ago, she must have been struck by the irony of the situation. "J.P.," as he is known to almost everyone in India, was the grand old man of Indian politics, a

confidant of Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi, and someone she had known since she was a child. In 1942, when she was imprisoned without trial for her efforts in the "Quit India" campaign to drive out the British, Narayan became a national hero-and one of the British Raj's most wanted criminals-for his sabotage work in the independence movement. Now Narayan was leading a grass-roots movement against corruption, a movement that seriously threatened Mrs. Gandhi's hold on her office and perhaps the stability of Indian society.

Critics see him as an irresponsible rabble-rouser out to destroy democratic government. To his admirers, he is the champion of the downtrodden, a political savior who has emerged from retirement to save them from what they see as despotic rule. The independent-minded son of a minor Bihar state official, Narayan at the age of 19 used a $600 wedding gift to set off alone to the U.S., where he studied at Berkeley and the University of Wisconsin and became a convert to Communism. Returning to India, he became deeply involved with Gandhi and Nehru in the independence movement. Still, he was not an advocate of Gandhi's principles of nonviolence and organized a guerrilla force to disrupt rails and communications and foment strikes and riots.

Following independence in 1947, he grew increasingly disenchanted with party politics and even spurned offers by Nehru to join his Cabinet. Explained Narayan: "The party system, so it appeared to me, was seeking to reduce the people to the position of sheep whose only function was to choose periodically the shepherds who would look after their welfare."

Despite Narayan's criticism of government corruption, his movement offers no clear-cut program for social or economic reform. J.P. talks vaguely of "partyless democracy" and returning power to the villages. He urges his followers to engage in such tactics as gherao (laying siege) and dharna (sit-ins). But almost invariably his civil-disobedience campaigns have turned violent.

When rampaging students in Gujarat managed to bring down the state government, J.P. was impressed and decided to try to do the same thing in Bihar, his home state. The demonstrations led to riots, and Mrs. Gandhi appealed to J.P. to call them off. He refused. When Railways Minister Lalit Mishra was assassinated

on a visit to Bihar last January, the Congress Party accused Narayan of unleashing a "cult of violence, intimidation and coercion."

What bothers many observers is J.P.'s concept of "defensible violence"-that violence is permissible to prevent a greater violence or injustice from occurring. This evoked old memories of his World War II sabotage work. In addition to many sincere followers, J.P.'s movement has attracted a wide spectrum of militant rightist and leftist opposition parties that have little in common but their dislike of Mrs. Gandhi. Yet despite the support of these dubious elements, Narayan's is essentially a one-man revolution held together by his remarkable personality. "The day J.P. dies, and he is a sick man," said a member of Parliament recently, "his total revolution will collapse totally."

TOTAL REVOLUTION

[On his return home to Patna in 1975 after release from detention due to acute illness, JP wrote a long letter to his followers explaining the circumstances of the Bihar movement and committing the remaining years of his life to total revolution.]

CONTINUING CHANGE

From the very beginning I have been saying in the course of my speeches that the objective of our movement is total revolution. In other words this movement aims at bringing about a revolutionary change in all aspects of the life of both society and individual. The objective of this movement is not merely to change the Government, but also to change the society and the individual. That is why I have called it total revolution. You can also call it a comprehensive revolution. There is some difference in the meaning of the terms 'total' and 'comprehensive', but both are almost the same to me. A comprehensive revolution can also be total ... This is not something that can be achieved in a day or in a year or two. In order to achieve this we shall have to carry on a struggle for a long time, and at that same time carry on constructive and creative activities. This double process of struggle and construction is a necessity in order to achieve total revolution.

The situation at present is that the people are afraid and thousands of leaders and workers are in prison. Hence it is possible

that, in their absence, the revolution may not continue in the form in which it was proceeding last year. However, since we have to bring about a revolution in every sphere, my appeal to all of you who think of the country and the society is that you all should play a part in it. For instance, take the field of education. It is generally felt by all, including eminent educationists and members of the Kothari Commission, that there should be a radical change in the field of education from the primary to the secondary stage. But very little has been achieved in this direction. There is deep discontent among the students on this point, as the education they are receiving is full of defects and the future before them is dark. The outward manifestations of their discontent have been suppressed now. But discontent continues to be present in their hearts and will come out into the open at some time or the other when there is a suitable opportunity. The problem will not be solved by this. But whenever such an explosion takes place, the society and the leaders of the society get a warning that they should beware, destruction is around the corner, they must change their ways, they must think and they must do something.

There are other similar problems, particularly the economic and social problems of Harijans and the tribal people. From the economic point of view they are poor and backward. From the social point of view their condition is even worse. Even today Harijans are treated badly and kept separate as untouchables by the people belonging to the so-called upper castes. Not only this. The anger of the people of these castes towards them sometimes assumes a dangerous character. So many incidents involving the burning alive of Harijans have taken place and are continuing to take place. The soldiers of total revolution will have to find a constructive solution to this explosive situation. For this they will have to enter the lives of the Harijan and tribal people and, after winning their hearts through service, bring them into the mainstream of Indian society. This is the sort of constructive service without which total revolution will remain incomplete.

Now the question arises, what to do for total revolution in the present situation? There are four aspects of the work for total revolution: struggle, construction, propaganda, and organization. In the present situation we should concentrate or he constructive

aspect. For example, it should be the main plank of our programme to turn the people's and the youth's minds against such evils as the dowry system, caste-distinctions, untouchability, communalism etc. and to work unitedly for social and cultural integration. Total revolution is permanent evolution. It will always go on and keep on changing both our personal and social lives. This revolution knows no respite, no halt, certainly not a complete halt. Of course, according to the needs of the situation its form will change, its programme will change, its processes will change.

(Letter to People of Bihar, 1975)

WHY AND HOW?

Since Independence, full twenty-eight years now, there has been no real change in the social, economic and political structure of our society. Zamindari is abolished, land reform laws have been passed, untouchability has been legally prohibited, and so on. But the village in most parts of India is still in the grip of the higher castes and the bigger and medium landowners. The small and marginal landowners are the landless, the backward classes and the Harijans -- these form the majority in most villages in most states, perhaps in nine-tenths of India. Yet their position continues to be miserable. Harijans are still burnt alive. The Adivasis are still the most backward section, barring the Harijans. And the money-lenders (who include many land-owners and shopkeepers, maybe petty themselves) mercilessly cheat and exploit the Adivasis, who in Bihar call the plainsmen dikku.

Some industries, banks, life insurance have been nationalized. Railways were nationalized long ago. New large public-sector industries have been established. But all this adds up to state capitalism and inefficiency, waste and corruption. State capitalism means more power to the State, mainly the state bureaucracy, or what Galbraith aptly calls 'the public bureaucracy'. There is no element or trait of socialism in all this. The working class and the public or, let. us say, the people have no place in all this except as workers or consumers. There is no economic democracy, which is so much talked about, nor even industrial democracy. This does not mean that I am opposed to socialism. It is only because I am so deeply concerned about socialism that I am pointing out all

this. It is a pity that our socialists very largely equate socialism with nationalization.

The educational system in spite of several committees and commissions remains basically what it was during British rule: class education designed as an escalator to reach the top. There is so much to say about this, but this is not the place. Here I am trying only to show that the structure of society has remained unchanged through the years since Independence.

The customs, manners, beliefs, superstitions, all these remain much the same for the masses. Even among the classes the change is superficial in most parts.

Since Independence there has been a steady decline in political, public and business morality. If we take social and economic development, the picture is frightful.. Population growth goes racing forward. Poverty is also growing: more than 40 per cent of the people are below the poverty line. The barest necessities such as drinking water, man-worthy and not cattle-worthy housing, medical care, apart from food and clothing, are not available. Schools are few and the teaching is bad. The papers say today that Bihar is the richest State in the country in minerals. Bihar also has good land and perennial rivers. Why then is Bihar the poorest State in India? Well, one could go on adding to that list.

The question is, can the picture be fundamentally altered through the ordinary democratic process? Even if the Opposition wins, will the picture change? I fear, no, laws will be passed and applied, money will be spent even if all this is done, possibly without the corruption creeping in, will the structure, the system, the 'order' of our society change? I think, no. Why?

Before I answer let me elucidate what I mean by a few examples. Take the marriage customs, particularly the tilak and dahez (dowry) system, prevalent in Bihar, Bengal, UP and some other States. This evil has been sought to be corrected by law, but the law has been a dead letter. Meanwhile, the disease is growing fast, ruining many families and ruining the lives of many girls. Castes that had till the other day been free of this evil are rapidly falling a prey to it, because what is a social evil appears to them

to be a status symbol. There is no remedy but a vigorous social movement, a peaceful struggle against the evil. Likewise, the implementation of land reforms, homestead tenancy legislation, removal of corruption in the administration etc. All this requires a mass awakening and a mass struggle. The youth, including the students, must naturally be in the vanguard.

The question is even larger. It is how to bring about a systemic change in society; i.e. how to bring about what I have called a total revolution: revolution in every sphere and aspect of society. The question becomes harder to answer when it is added that the total revolution has to be peacefully brought about without impairing the democratic structure of society and affecting the democratic way of life of the people. Put in this way, even the most legalistic and constitutionalist democrat would agree that all this could never be accomplished if the functioning of democracy were restricted to elections, legislation, planning and administrative execution. There must also be people's direct action. This action would almost certainly comprise, among other forms, civil disobedience, peaceful resistance, non-cooperation in short, satyagraha in its widest sense. One of the unstated implications of such a satyagraha would be self-change: that is to say, those wanting to change must also change themselves before launching any kind of action.

A STATEMAN OF WORLD IMPORTANCE

In this article Edward Goldsmith shows how Indira Gandhi has betrayed the Gandhiism of the Mahatma in pursuing India's industrialisation and urbanisation, and most recently in imprisoning J P Narayan, political leader of the Sarvodaya Movement. Published in The Ecologist Vol. 5 No. 7, August / September 1975.

Jayaprakash Narayan has been jailed along with other leaders of the Gandhian Movement and those of the Opposition parties which have recently allied themselves with it. Mrs. Indira Gandhi has thus played into the hands of her opponents, just as did the Vice-regal Government each time that it arrested Mahatma Gandhi, for experience has shown that there is no better way to alienate public sympathy than by arresting selfless patriots, and no more

effective way to mobilize it than by contriving to be arrested. Indeed we are living a historic moment, for what Mrs. Gandhi has actually achieved is to set in motion a new satyagraha (non-violent resistance) campaign - this time against herself and what she stands for.

There is a certain logic in these developments. First of all Jayaprakash Narayan, or JP as he is affectionately known in India, along with Vinoba Bhave (now 80 years old) is the heir to Mahatma Gandhi. The latter is now the spiritual leader of the Gandhian or Sarvodaya Movement, the former its political leader. Though JP founded the Socialist Party of India, he never sought political power for himself and when Nehru invited him to join his Government he refused.

The Gandhian social philosophy is very profound and very beautiful, and provides a complete blueprint for life in a decentralised rural society living in harmony with its environment. Unfortunately it was never applied, for when Nehru came to power he repudiated it, and pursued instead the policies of westernisation and industrialisation initiated by the British Raj. This he did with a degree of zeal which no Colonial Government would have dared display, and his daughter Indira Gandhi has still further accelerated their implementation.

It follows that the new satyagraha campaign is being fought by the same movement as the last and against the same misguided policies. Why are they so misguided? This should be evident from but two considerations. Ninety percent of India's population of 600 million people lives in the villages - some 540 million of them - in which the only visible benefits of modern technology are the odd bicycle and Singer sewing-machine. Only 20 percent live in the cities. As Gandhi pointed out it is considerably more expensive in terms of resources and hence of money to keep people in cities than in villages. Indeed India cannot begin to afford to provide its present relatively small urban population with more than an insignificant fraction of the amenities required for urban living: homes, schools, roads, sewage works and jobs.

Yet to industrialise India means urbanizing it. It means encouraging the majority of the Indian people, who, at the current rate of population growth, will number more than 1 billion by the

end of the century, to move to the cities, of which at least three will by then have populations of over 30 million - veritable human anthills - where misery and degradation would reach undreamt-of heights.

Where would the resources come from for building and maintaining these massive cities? They can only come from the countryside, which must thereby be systematically pillaged on an even greater scale than is the case today, to obtain the land, building materials, lumber, food and water required for so gigantic an enterprise.

It is not generally appreciated that the great famines which occurred during the British Raj were not due so much to crop failures (there had been many of these before and provision for them was made by the stores maintained by the farmers themselves at the village level) as to the fact that crop failures caused prices to rise thereby making it inaccessible to the impoverished farmers. They starved, in fact, because the food had been diverted to the cities.

Today food is being sold abroad. At least 35 percent of India's exports are made up from agricultural produce, 25 percent of which is food. For a country with a chronic food shortage to sell food abroad to finance the building of motorways and office blocks, not to mention the manufacture of atom bombs, must surely be the most irresponsible not to say callous policy which a government has yet drawn up.

Clearly a responsible and humane policy would tend in a very different direction. It would abandon the outdated ideals of our Western urban society, which is itself on the verge of collapse, and would opt for a rural solution to the great problems it faces.

This is the basis of the Gandhian social philosophy, and in this sense JP's movement is a revolt of the countryside against the cities. Why is it classed as a "right-wing" movement by Indira Gandhi and her Soviet allies? It is indeed right-wing if this means that it does not aim at putting the proletariat in power, but the peasants who outnumber them ten to one. Indeed if JP's policies were adopted there would be no urban proletariat - India would become instead the association of village republics which Gandhi

dreamed of - the foundations of which Vinoba and JP have struggled for 30 years to lay down.

It is indeed right-wing if this means that it stands for the maintenance of Indian cultural traditions in the face of disruptive urban influences - which for too long now have been associated with 'progress'. It is certainly not right-wing, however, if by this is meant advocating unfettered large-scale enterprise, still less a monolithic centralised militarist state, in which the dominant ethnic group ruthlessly persecutes its minorities and engages in wars of conquest with its neighbours.

This perfectly describes the fascist state. Sadly India, under Indira Gandhi is also coming to answer this description. Diametrically opposed to it is JP's movement which stands for an association of village republics (Panchayat Raj), for non-violence towards men and- nature (ahimsa) for non-violent resistance (satyagraha) and for the welfare of all (sarvodaya) not just the greatest number.

In the current sense of the terms JP's movement is neither 'right-wing' nor 'left-wing'. Its principles transcend these crude classifications. If anything it can be related to the anarchist tradition of Kropotkin, Bakunin, Proudhon and Tolstoy, (Gandhi, an admirer of Tolstoy, described himself as a "philosophical anarchist") as well as to the new ecology movement, represented in Britain by the Ecology Party (formerly the People Party [now the Green Party]), Ecologie et Survie in Alsace and the Values Party in New Zealand.

The need for a new ideology is apparent since we are living in an ideological vacuum. Western liberal democracy has nothing to offer, and is unlikely to survive the next decade in any major country. Nor has Russian communism which provides but an alternative pattern for living in an industrial society - and has little relevance to a world trying desperately to negotiate the transition to the post industrial age.

Maoism is more attractive. The Chinese have undoubtedly solved many of the practical problems of decentralised living, but their social philosophy is rudimentary. Man is still regarded by them, in economic terms, as an animal whose main functions are

to produce and to consume. The goals of the Chinese state are basically those of our present Industrial world. It is the means of achieving those ends that are different - and admittedly more realistic.

Gandhiism is both more philosophical and more radical. It offers a new set of goals - not just a new way of achieving the old ones. The decentralised way of life is not desirable for economic reasons only, but because it is that which best satisfies man's biological, social and spiritual needs - needs whose very existence have been forgotten in the general stampede for material benefits into which the world has been irresistibly drawn.

However the reaction against materialism has already begun, and it is likely to be overwhelming; its implications are inestimable, and the signs are that Gandhiism may well be its vehicle. Indira, though she does not know it, may indeed be struggling to suppress what is destined to become the social philosophy of the post-industrial age.

Fifty years ago her illustrious namesake fought valiantly to oppose the tide of westernisation and industrialisation which was then beginning to sweep the world. Although he was certainly the greatest man in India's history, probably in world history, and was supported by the vast majority of the Indian people, he was unable to reverse the trend. The tide, however, has now turned. It is Indira Gandhi who is swimming against it, and with the vast mass of the Indian people against her she must inevitably be overcome by it.

In the meantime everything must be done to bring about the release of JP. He is both too admirable and too important to be allowed to languish in prison. He is the one man capable of mobilising a major nation in to adopting the policies which all nations will have to adopt if mankind is to have a future.

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN ON RSS

RSS has been the most maligned and most misunderstood organization in India. Its most critics have developed extremely prejudicial views against it mainly from the motivated false propaganda. One such person was Loknayak Jayaprakash

Narayana (JP) who had started off with a strong prejudice against RSS in the forties. But his contacts with RSS workers and leaders made him understand RSS in a positive way, and he started appreciating its work and ideology. He was very much impressed when he found during Bihar famine of 1966 that, for relief work, RSS workers collected the most, spent the least on collection and distributed the collections the best. After that his contacts with RSS grew and his misconceptions disappeared. After the emergency, on Nov.3, 1977, JP addressed a huge RSS training camp in Patna. Following are some excerpts from his speech:

"....RSS is a revolutionary organisation. No other organisation in the country comes anywhere near it. It alone has the capacity to transform society, end casteism and wipe the tears from the eyes of the poor. Its very name is 'Rashtriya', that is national. I am not saying this to flatter you. I believe you have a historic role to play.... I have great expectations from this revolutionary organisation which has taken up the challenge of creating a new India. I have welcomed your venture wholeheartedly. Sometimes I have offered you my advice and have even criticised you, but that was as a friend...There is no other organisation in the country which can match you...The RSS should think over this: how to bring about economic transformation? How to transform the villages? All our leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, have worked for it. You have included Mahatma Gandhi also in your morning prayers and he is indeed worth remembering every morning. This is very good thing you have done. If he had lived a little longer he would have guided us a little more to remove untouchability and other evils from the Hindu society. But the way is clear now and I think that more than myself you can undertake this mission because you are more competent to do it. You think and deliberate upon the various aspects of our traditions, our culture and Dharma constantly."

"This society, its glorious history and the heritage of our forefathers, the sacrifices of the builders of this country and their achievements and the free- dom that we have won - you are the inheritors of it all and it is for you to make the best use of it...Your word has far reaching effect. There is the force of spiritualism and thousands of years of our ancient culture at your back. You are also in the forefront of the transformation that is taking place before our very eyes. The results of this change are also at your disposal...I commend to you the ideals of service, renuncition, sacrifice. I have no doubt that you are already imbued with these ideals and are of self-sacrificing nature and noble conduct. Here is the arena of a vast country open to you. You can accomplish a lot. May God give you strength and may you live up to such expectations."

TOTAL REVOLUTION

[On his return home to Patna in 1975 after release from detention due to acute illness, JP wrote a long letter to his followers explaining the circumstances of the Bihar movement and committing the remaining years of his life to total revolution.]

Continuing Change

From the very beginning I have been saying in the course of my speeches that the objective of our movement is total revolution. In other words this movement aims at bringing about a revolutionary change in all aspects of the life of both society and individual. The objective of this movement is not merely to change the Government, but also to change the society and the individual. That is why I have called it total revolution. You can also call it a comprehensive revolution. There is some difference in the meaning of the terms 'total' and 'comprehensive', but both are almost the same to me. A comprehensive revolution can also be total... This is not something that can be achieved in a day or in a year or two. In order to achieve this we shall have to carry on a struggle for a long time, and at that same time carry on constructive and creative activities. This double process of struggle and construction is a necessity in order to achieve total revolution.

The situation at present is that the people are afraid and thousands of leaders and workers are in prison. Hence it is possible that, in their absence, the revolution may not continue in the form in which it was proceeding last year. However, since we have to bring about a revolution in every sphere, my appeal to all of you who think of the country and the society is that you all should play a part in it. For instance, take the field of education. It is

generally felt by all, including eminent educationists and members of the Kothari Commission, that there should be a radical change in the field of education from the primary to the secondary stage. But very little has been achieved in this direction.

There is deep discontent among the students on this point, as the education they are receiving is full of defects and the future before them is dark. The outward manifestations of their discontent have been suppressed now. But discontent continues to be present in their hearts and will come out into the open at some time or the other when there is a suitable opportunity. The problem will not be solved by this. But whenever such an explosion takes place, the society and the leaders of the society get a warning that they should beware, destruction is around the corner, they must change their ways, they must think and they must do something.

There are other similar problems, particularly the economic and social problems of Harijans and the tribal people. From the economic point of view they are poor and backward. From the social point of view their condition is even worse. Even today Harijans are treated badly and kept separate as untouchables by the people belonging to the so-called upper castes. Not only this. The anger of the people of these castes towards them sometimes assumes a dangerous character. So many incidents involving the burning alive of Harijans have taken place and are continuing to take place. The soldiers of total revolution will have to find a constructive solution to this explosive situation. For this they will have to enter the lives of the Harijan and tribal people and, after winning their hearts through service, bring them into the mainstream of Indian society. This is the sort of constructive service without which total revolution will remain incomplete.

Now the question arises, what to do for total revolution in the present situation? There are four aspects of the work for total revolution: struggle, construction, propaganda, and organization. In the present situation we should concentrate or he constructive aspect. For example, it should be the main plank of our programme to turn the people's and the youth's minds against such evils as the dowry system, caste-distinctions, untouchability, communalism etc. and to work unitedly for social and cultural integration. Total revolution is permanent evolution. It will always go on and keep

on changing both our personal and social lives. This revolution knows no respite, no halt, certainly not a complete halt. Of course, according to the needs of the situation its form will change, its programme will change, its processes will change.

(Letter to People of Bihar, 1975)

Since Independence, full twenty-eight years now, there has been no real change in the social, economic and political structure of our society. Zamindari is abolished, land reform laws have been passed, untouchability has been legally prohibited, and so on. But the village in most parts of India is still in the grip of the higher castes and the bigger and medium landowners. The small and marginal landowners are the landless, the backward classes and the Harijans - these form the majority in most villages in most states, perhaps in nine-tenths of India. Yet their position continues to be miserable. Harijans are still burnt alive. The Adivasis are still the most backward section, barring the Harijans. And the money-lenders (who include many land-owners and shopkeepers, maybe petty themselves) mercilessly cheat and exploit the Adivasis, who in Bihar call the plainsmen dikku.

Some industries, banks, life insurance have been nationalized. Railways were nationalized long ago. New large public-sector industries have been established. But all this adds up to state capitalism and inefficiency, waste and corruption. State capitalism means more power to the State, mainly the state bureaucracy, or what Galbraith aptly calls 'the public bureaucracy'. There is no element or trait of socialism in all this. The working class and the public or, let us say, the people have no place in all this except as workers or consumers. There is no economic democracy, which is so much talked about, nor even industrial democracy. This does not mean that I am opposed to socialism. It is only because I am so deeply concerned about socialism that I am pointing out all this. It is a pity that our socialists very largely equate socialism with nationalization.

The educational system in spite of several committees and commissions remains basically what it was during British rule: class education designed as an escalator to reach the top. There is so much to say about this, but this is not the place. Here I am trying only to show that the structure of society has remained

unchanged through the years since Independence. The customs, manners, beliefs, superstitions, all these remain much the same for the masses. Even among the classes the change is superficial in most parts.

Since Independence there has been a steady decline in political, public and business morality. If we take social and economic development, the picture is frightful. Population growth goes racing forward. Poverty is also growing: more than 40 per cent of the people are below the poverty line. The barest necessities such as drinking water, man-worthy and not cattle-worthy housing, medical care, apart from food and clothing, are not available. Schools are few and the teaching is bad. The papers say today that Bihar is the richest State in the country in minerals. Bihar also has good land and perennial rivers. Why then is Bihar the poorest State in India? Well, one could go on adding to that list.

The question is, can the picture be fundamentally altered through the ordinary democratic process? Even if the Opposition wins, will the picture change? I fear, no, laws will be passed and applied, money will be spent - even if all this is done, possibly without the corruption creeping in, will the structure, the system, the 'order' of our society change? I think, no. Why?

Before I answer let me elucidate what I mean by a few examples. Take the marriage customs, particularly the tilak and dahez (dowry) system, prevalent in Bihar, Bengal, UP and some other States. This evil has been sought to be corrected by law, but the law has been a dead letter. Meanwhile, the disease is growing fast, ruining many families and ruining the lives of many girls. Castes that had till the other day been free of this evil are rapidly falling a prey to it, because what is a social evil appears to them to be a status symbol. There is no remedy but a vigorous social movement, a peaceful struggle against the evil. Likewise, the implementation of land reforms, homestead tenancy legislation, removal of corruption in the administration etc. All this requires a mass awakening and a mass struggle. The youth, including the students, must naturally be in the vanguard.

The question is even larger. It is how to bring about a systemic change in society; i.e. how to bring about what I have called a total

revolution: revolution in every sphere and aspect of society. The question becomes harder to answer when it is added that the total revolution has to be peacefully brought about without impairing the democratic structure of society and affecting the democratic way of life of the people.

Put in this way, even the most legalistic and constitutionalist democrat would agree that all this could never be accomplished if the functioning of democracy were restricted to elections, legislation, planning and administrative execution. There must also be people's direct action. This action would almost certainly comprise, among other forms, civil disobedience, peaceful resistance, non-cooperation - in short, satyagraha in its widest sense. One of the unstated implications of such a satyagraha would be self-change: that is to say, those wanting to change must also change themselves before launching any kind of action.

GORA -- AN ATHEIST GANDHIAN

Goparaju Ramachandra Rao, known as 'Gora' was born on 15 November 1902, at Chatrapur, a small town in Orissa. His father, a composer of devotional songs and a government official, worked as a clerk in the Forestry Department.

Later he moved to Kakinada, Andhra, where he worked in the Revenue Department. At 20 years of age Gora married Saraswati, aged 10 years, the daughter of a close friend of his father's. After his marriage Gora studied at Presidency College, Madras, where he received an M.Sc.

His first job was as a lecturer in biology at the American College, Madurai, where he was able to rent cheaply a large haunted house in which nobody else would live. He was already critical of Hinduism and was told by the college authorities that if he became a Christian he would be sent to the United States to study for his doctorate.

As he knew nothing of Christianity at the time, he started a comparative study of Hinduism and Christianity, but concluded that one religion was no better than the other. He began to question the existence of God, personal or impersonal, and to reject metaphysical explanations of the human condition.

In Colombo

He resigned his lectureship to spend a year on cotton research at a government agricultural station in Coimbatore, but left this job 'as I could not fit into the dull routine of official duties'. Then he became a lecturer in biology at the Ananda College, Colombo, a Buddhist institution. Buddhist members of the Sangha there objected to Gora dissecting frogs to demonstrate their heart beats to students. (Yeats later at Sevagram some of Gandhi's followers objected to Gora's dissection of a frog when he was teaching student nurses. Gandhi, however, after listening to both sides decided that Gora could dissect frogs for scientific demonstration and did not consider this contrary to his doctrine of non-violence)

Unconventional

In 1928 Gora returned to Kakinada, where he was appointed as a lecturer at P.R. College. Shortly afterwards Gora's father asked him to leave the family home as Gora had ceased to wear the sacred thread. After two and a half years they were reconciled and his father invited Gora to dine again with the family.

Nationalist

It was at this time that Gora first came into contact with Gandhi's ideas and he immediately decided that from then onwards he would be 'a human being without a caste label'. He discarded western clothes and wore khadi. Aided by student Volunteers he organized demonstrations against untouchability and in support of the salt satyagraha. He also started adult classes to teach the illiterate to read and write.

A Rebel

In 1932 he wrote an article on 'The Concept of God' for a student magazine in which he attacked the irrationality of idol worship and (as at university seminars) expressed his view that God was a concept, not a scientific fact, and that the endeavour to remove poverty and suffering was impeded by Hinduism and by such metaphysical ideas as karma and dharma.

He was asked to resign his lectureship, although the Vice-Chancellor (Dr S. Radhakrishnan) seemed sympathetic to his view

when he argued with him that freedom of thought was essential to university education and without it higher education was useless. A year later he was offered another lectureship at Hindu College, Machilipatnam. Meanwhile he ran a tutorial institution, where he and other teachers charged low fees and received equal salaries for their work.

Opposed Superstition, Promoted Scientific Outlook

Gora also encouraged his wife to defy the superstition that women should not expose themselves to the light of an eclipse or cut vegetables when pregnant. The resultant child was without the physical deformity expected to result from the breach of these customs.

From 1936 he started to visit Andhra villages and tried to persuade villagers to give up superstitions and adopt scientific attitudes. He encouraged them to discard caste symbols and tried to foster interdining between members of different castes.

Gora held that atheism implied honesty, keeping one's word, and punctuality. He always made it a rule to start meetings punctually, although only two or three people were present and hundreds came late. The meetings went on for hours, and Gora always left as lengthy a period as people wanted for questions. When he was asked why he greeted an opponent with a 'Namaskar' (the joining and raising of the hands in a traditional greeting of respect) he said he was exchanging a reciprocal greeting with a fellow human being, not saluting the non-existent divine in the other person.

By this time Gora had six children, but with his wife's support he decided that the time had come to give up his employment as a university teacher, so he resigned.

Work for Eradication of Caste and Untouchability

Some atheist followers from Mundunur, a village about thirty miles from Machilipatnam, invited Gora and his family to settle there, offering him a house and their support. He did so and, using the village as a base, started to travel throughout Andhra, going from one village to another to preach against caste. Gora said that the organization of interdining was difficult. He found

that members of the lower castes were prepared to interdine with higher castes but not with castes they considered lower ranking than themselves, or with untouchables. He considered that it would help to remove Hindu-Muslim difference if they ate together. He started by eating beef with Muslims and asking them to eat pork with him. He thought it was useful in breaking down caste barriers (particularly for those who were vegetarians like himself) to demonstrate lack of caste prejudice by interdining and publicly eating whatever was the food of others.

News of these dramatic protests against caste barriers spread and Gora's name started to become widely known in Andhra, as a strange saint-like character who preached atheism. He also gave demonstrations of fire walking to show that there was noting mysterious about it, and that it could easily be done 'because of the presence of water vapour which provides a protective covering for the feet'. However, it was said that many villagers were more impressed by the fire walking than by the scientific explanation which Gora provided.

GANDHI AND GORA

In September 1941, Gora wrote to Gandhi asking for an interview. He wrote:

For one year I have tackled the problem of untouchability with the atheistic outlook. I have a few co-workers who agree with me in the atheistic approach. The atheistic approach mainly consists in the non-recognition of sectarian labels like Hindu, Muslim, Christian. We take man as man. Thus by discarding the lables (sic) and mixing up people in the general stream of humanity, we hope to remove untouchability also.

Our programme of work so far has been confined to systematic and periodical cosmopolitan dinners in which the guests pay for their fare which is always simple and cheap. The dinner is open to all and about forty to fifty guests drawn from all castes, including 'untouchables', take part in the dinner. The persons vary from time to time.

In the village atmosphere where caste restrictions continue to be rigid, open cosmopolitan dinners are not easy to accomplish, Yet we succeed, because we find that the atheistic attitude brings

a definite cosmopolitan outlook and pushes out all sectarianism including untouchability.

The result of one year's work encouraged us to proceed along the same lines. Before we do so, we desire to seek your advice. All of us have great regard for your wisdom and experience. We want to be told and warned of the possible pitfalls, if any, that lie in the way of our atheistic approach. In the light of your advice we are prepared to revise our outlook and programmes. If you like, I will go to Sevagram for a personal talk with you.

Gandhi replied 'Atheism is a denial of self. No one has succeeded in its propagation. Such success as you have attained is due to your sincere work among the people around you. I am sorry I cannot invite you to come here. I have no time to spare for talks'.

Two years later Gandhi was persuaded by mutual friends to meet Gora at Sevagram. Gora said to him

God is a falsehood conceived by man. Like many falsehoods it was, in the past, useful to some extent, but like all falsehoods, it polluted human life in the long run. So belief in god can go, and it must go to wash off corruption and to increase morality in mankind. I want atheism to make man self-confident and to establish social and economic equality, non-violently. Tell me, Bapu, where I am wrong.

Gandhi replied:

Yes, I see an ideal in your talk. I can neither say my theism is right nor your atheism wrong. We are seekers after truth. We change whenever we find ourselves in the wrong. I changed like that many times in my life. I see you are a worker. You are not a fanatic. You will change whenever you find yourself in the wrong. Whether you are in the right or I am in the right, results will prove. Then I may go your way or you may come my way; or both of us may go a third way. So go ahead with your work. I will help you though your method is against mine.

On another occasion Gandhi said to Gora:

Truth means existence: the existence of that we know and of that we do not know. The sum total of all existence is absolute

truth or the truth.... the concepts of truth may differ. But we all admit and respect truth. That truth I call God. This notion of truth as an objective, impersonal reality is historically prior to the atomistic, epistemological and scientific view of truth.

If Gandhi had lived longer he would have presided at the marriage of Gora's eldest daughter to a Harijan at Gandhi's ashram. They had a long discussion as to the form of words to be used at the marriage ceremony, as Gora would not allow the word God to be used. Gandhi agreed to substitute the word 'Satya', where he would have used God, saying 'For me God is truth although for you truth is not God. I am willing to substitute "Satya" where I would have used God at the ceremony'.

True Gandhian

Dr. Prakash Gupta said that when Gora stayed in Gandhi's ashram he was 'completely in its spirit'. Dr Gupta was in charge of scavenging (the cleaning of lavatories) and he said that Gora always volunteered for these unpleasant tasks, which some members tried to avoid. On the occasion Gandhi had prepared a declaration that he wanted all ashram members to sign. Only Gora said he could not as it began 'in the name of God'. Gandhi immediately crossed out the word God and substituted the word 'truth', then Gora signed.

Gandhi expressed a wish to meet Gora's followers and it was agreed that a group of them, including Gora's son Lavanam, should come and live at Sevagram for training.

Prabhakarji said 'Gora was a soft man, not a hard man. Something in him spoke to something in me. We had our strong differences but we understood each other. He was a true Gandhian'.

Gora said 'Gandhi was bored by those who always agreed with him. He always enjoyed discussion and argument when there was a basis of agreement which made the exchange of differing ideas meaningful'.

Truth

Gora agreed that he and Gandhi shared the view that social institutions are the expression of values that mould the minds of individuals and that by changing the values one changes the

institutions. They both saw truth as an objective, impersonal reality. For Gandhi truth was ultimately God -- the divine reality identified with all that is. [8] Because every man embodies divine truth, he carries within himself a portion of that truth and engages in selfless search for it. Gandhi also sought to augment it in individuals, groups and institutions. For Gora there was no identifiable divine absolute; he denied it. He saw the total of all existence as a set of relative truths constantly changing as scientifically verifiable knowledge increased. Truth for both of them was an objective, impersonal reality, but for Gandhi it had an ultimate explanation and for Gora it did not. For Gora man was his own legislator, giving a meaning to his own life by committing himself to principles that had no significance (other than aesthetic) apart from such committal.

Gora admired Gandhi for his open conduct and active living. Gandhi's openness fostered non-violence and in active living Gandhi experimentally tested his truth. For Gora individuals were only responsible to themselves and their fellow men for their deeds, and were free to choose and to act not act. Men were self-made, moulded by environment and to a much lesser degree by their genes. Men had no Karmic inheritance and were responsible for their lives and actions. God, government, property, mores and conventions were man-made and could be changed by men.

GORA AND POLITICS

In the 1940s Gora worked for the Congress party and the Independence movement. From 1945 until Independence he was a full-time organizer for the All-India Congress Committee in Delhi. After Independence he resigned from the congress sharing Gandhi's view on the future shape that the movement should take. For the rest of his life he was associated with the Sarvodaya movement.

Gora stood as an independent candidate in two Andhra Pradesh elections: first in 1952 from Vijayawada for the Lok Sabha, and then in 1967 for the Legislative Assembly. He stood not to win 'because elections present educative opportunities'. He tried to show how a political candidate should behave, spending no money and making no attacks on other candidates. He invited all

the other candidates to share common platforms with him and explain their views and policies to the voters, but few accepted. At his meetings he would provide people with the names and symbols of all the candidates and explain election procedure. He would never ask for votes. He advised all voters to attend all the political meetings held during the election campaign and to question the candidates closely. He would not end a meeting until there were no more questions.

Pomplessness

Gora believed that it was a government responsibility to feed and clothe everybody and to provide all citizens with work. A socialist government should promote social and economic equality. Ministers, M.P.s, M.L.A.s should set an example in simple and unpretentious living. People's representatives should live in cheap houses, have cheap cars, travel third class on the railway, and use buses, never planes. From 1952 he started his campaign for 'pomplessness' and Congress politicians in Vijayawada were constantly harassed by peaceful demonstrations and exhortations to the simple life by Gora's followers.

In 1947 Gora had established his ashram at Patamata, just outside the town of Vijayawada. He started a weekly magazine in Telugu to propagate his views, called Sangam, and subsequently published a number of books in English and Telugu on his views, activities and the need for party-less, decentralized democracy.

Many of Gora's Sarvodaya colleagues, although they agreed with his general approach to politics, found it difficult to go as far as he did in war against the caste system. Chundi Jagannatham said

The only argument of Gora's I could not digest was over food. In working with Harijans he urged that one must eat with them. He said, only if you are accustomed to having beef between your teeth, can you conquer all prejudices. You must eat what they eat if you are to remove caste and religious barriers. If only, Gora said, you friends would accept my strategy, real progress could be made. To achieve results one must fully participate in the lives of Herijans; social work among them done by vegetarian outsiders is not the same thing at all.

Bhoodan

Gora supported the Bhoodan movement because it promoted mutual help in villages, but he wanted direct action programmes to bring pressure to bear on state governments. He thought that Vinoba Bhave concentrated too much on the metaphysical aspects of Gandhi's thought and not on the dynamic aspects of non-violent revolution. He complained of the lack of effective follow-up on Bhoodan and Gramdan. For Vinoba Bhave Gora had respect, but none of the sympathy, liking and admiration that he had for Gandhi.

'Why Gramraj' -- Democratic Decentralization

In 1958 Gora published Why Gram Raj in which he advocated devolution of political power and complete decentralization of the economy in accordance with Gandhian ideals. He saw anarchy as the main feature of a non-violent society in which self-restraint and voluntary action would replace state power and coercion. Political parties were seen as groupings of divisive middle-men between people and governments.

As little power as possible should be delegated upwards from the new village republics, and delegates to higher levels should always be subject to control and recall by those they represented. People should understand, use, and not serve machines. Gandhi had objected to industrial society because it maimed and alienated men. Like Gandhi Gora had no objection to electricity and small-scale mechanical aids. Small was beautiful because it enhanced the quality of life.

Liberation of Women

In this period his views on morals started to shock some of his Sarvodaya colleagues. He considered that just as open rebellion could end private property so an open rebellion against the sanctity of marriage could end adultery. He said that there was no blame in unmarried motherhood for the woman. He considered that marriage was a public and joint declaration by two human beings of caring and responsibility towards each other and their offspring, nothing more. For responsible people marriage was only a social convention which might one day disappear.

The Great March

In 1960 Gora became known throughout India. He started by staging a satyagraha in front of the Legislative Assembly building in Hyderabad. A letter from him asking that blocs and whips should be abolished was read to the Legislative Assembly by the Speaker, who commented that although he could not collaborate with him, Gora had noble ideas. Meanwhile outside the Assembly Gora had been arrested. The Speaker announced that Gora would be released and talks between the state government and Gora would take place, to see if any of his ideas could be implemented.

Subsequently it was pointed out to Gora by Congress Ministers that the questions he raised should be taken up with the central government, as the changes he suggested were important, implying that conventions and rules and perhaps even the Constitution, would have to be changed.

in March 1960. it was decided that there should be a March to Delhi. Gora had always been close to Jayaprakash Narayan, who agreed to preside over a preparatory conference, which was held in Hyderabad in August 1960. This was followed by smaller meetings throughout the state, propagating the ideas of pomplessness in current politics, and partylessness to come.

Sevagram to Delhi on Foot

On 8 October 1960, the great march to Delhi started from Gandhi's Sevagram ashram. At the outset the party numbered sixteen, which increased to forty-two by the time they reached Delhi. Along various stretches of the march they were joined by large numbers of local supporters. They passed through districts of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, and reached Delhi in ninety-nine days after walking eleven hundred miles. At the head of the march a large flagless pole was carried, to symbolize people without party.

The Sarvodaya movement did not at first support the march, but district branches co-operated without being officially associated with it. Everywhere Sarvodaya members, acting individually, made arrangements for meetings and to provide the marchers with vegetarian food and a place to bathe and sleep. They covered eight to fourteen miles a day, starting at five a.m. and trying to reach

their destination by midday. They would have a meal on arrival. Everywhere they held meetings. In the towns they would speak to Bar Associations, Student Unions and other groups. Their programme was planned ten days in advance and Gora's son Lavanam would go ahead to see that posters were displayed and introductory leaflets distributed.

Only in one village in U.P. was there initial opposition to their presence. The landlord who controlled the village was a Congressman. He told Lavanam that he would not allow Gora and his friends to sleep in the village because they had supported the case for a separate Vidarbha state. (Gora similarly supported the movements for separate Andhra and Telengana states in Andhra Pradesh, because he considered that smaller political units were intrinsically better.)

The landlord sent all the villagers to the fields and when Gora and his friends arrived the village was empty. A meeting for five p.m. was announced through hand megaphones. Nobody from the village attended and on returning from the fields the villagers stayed in their huts, From nearby villages ten people came to the meeting including a school-master who asked a number of hostile questions. Gora spoke for three hours. Afterwards the teacher asked what arrangements had been made to feed them and, hearing none, sent them food from his village.

In another U.P. village there was an argument with a bidi leaf merchant. The marchers were carrying a banner reading 'Ministers are Our Servants'. The merchant said Our M.L.A. is a minister and we cannot accept anyone carrying such a banner., But after discussion he allowed them into the village under protest. Later the minister concerned sent Gora a personal note of apology.

Only in a few places did Jan Sangh, Congress, and Communist supporters attend meetings to put their cases, heckle and ask questions. Everywhere the marchers were fed by the villagers and given tea.

Letter to Nehru

Before reaching New Delhi Gora sent a letter to Nehru saying that the office of Prime Minister should be above party politics and asking him to contest the next Lok Sabha election as an

individual people's representative, not as a Congressman. He told Nehru that he should move to a modest, small house, and stop living in isolation from ordinary people in Teen Murthi. He also asked Nehru to strongly advocate inter-caste marriages -- the prelude to a casteless society -- to preach pomplessness, to abolish political parties, and to introduce decentralization.

Satyagraha and Discussion with Prime-minister Nehru

In January 1961 satyagraha was offered in front of Teen Murthi; Gora's march filled the headlines of newspapers and he received massive all-India publicity for his views.

Nehru's private secretary came to see Gora and offered him a choice. Nehru offered either to address the whole group for a few minutes, or meet Gora and a few friends for a full discussion of the issue raised. Gora accepted the second alternative after the offers had been fully discussed.

According to Gora, Nehru received him with great kindness and charm. Nehru said he had great sympathy with Gora's demands. They were all in the true Gandhian spirit, which he had always so admired, but they were difficult to implement in present circumstances, when he was trying to increase all India national unity. He was not in agreement with Gora on partylessness and argued that Gandhians could make a special contribution within Congress, particularly in educating people to choose worthy and unselfish representatives. As to pomplessness, he would personally prefer a more simple life style, but accepted the symbols of office which his colleagues thought suitable. Education was the most important task for them all and must come first; and then the secular ideals he shared with Gora could be achieved. He praised Gora's efforts in promoting intercaste marriages and castelessness. His differences with Gora were mainly on methods not ends. All sincere followers of Gandhi had his deep respect and Gora's thinking was. in many ways, except on parties and political democracy, remarkably similar to his own.

International Recognisation

After New Delhi Gora toured U.P. and M.P., held meetings and collected some thousands of rupees for his work in Andhra.

He returned by train travelling third class to Vijayawada. An unexpected consequence of the march was that Gora became much better known in the world outside India and started to receive invitations to visit foreign countries from many humanist groups. From then onwards he visited many European countries and became internationally known as a very unusual Gandhian.

The Last Years

Gora rejected historical determinism and considered Marxism to be a 'Fatalistic Philosophy'. Dialectical theory was, metaphysical. There was no simple economic or social model to explain change and he did not think that the caste system would change fundamentally (although it might be modified) by a change in the mode of production or the economic relations into which men entered to produce goods and services. He considered that the Indian Communist parties had made a fatal error in not frontally attacking the caste system: 'Look at them how they marry within caste and exploit the caste factor in electoral politics. Many of them do not understand that their living styles should be like those of villagers or the urban poor, if they are to successfully promote revolution.'

Jayaprakash Narayan and Gora

After the split between Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan, Gora sided with J.P., but continued to insist that any political movement must be partyless. (For Gora, Vinoba Bhave 'preached too much and acted too little'.) In 1975 Gora. and J.P. agreed on the need for total revolution and a complete social transformation but Gora urged on J.P. that he should not accept the collaboration of the parties in Bihar, but insist on their dissolution, and form a partyless bloc. J.P. argued that when parties offered their help in achieving stated political goals it was foolish to refuse their colaboration.

According to Sarvodaya leaders J.P. wanted Gora to lead the movement in Andhra Pradesh, and spent hours trying to persuade him saying 'He is a clean man, we must have him.'

Gora discussed with his friends the organization of a partyless conference in Warangal to disown J.P.'s movement, but was

dissuaded from doing so by his Sarvodaya friends. He went to Bihar and spoke in support of Jayaprakash Narayan, but continued to express his opposition to political parties and J.P.'s association with them.

Truth Seeker

Gora continued to reject Gandhi's view that the universe emanates from sat or absolute truth. For Gandhi morality and dharma could not be ultimately divorced from rta or cosmic order. For Gora both were man-made. At the level of relative truth they were in agreement that what at one time might be true might cease to be so as new insights were discovered. For Gora there was no God or absolute, personal or impersonal. Such ideas were false, or hypotheses. This last concession made it possible for Gandhi and Gandhians to work with him and accept him as a fellow seeker after truth. Gora, like Gandhi, was never dogmatic and always admitted the possibility of being wrong.

Gora was Unique

Gora died from a heart attack in 1975. Chundi Jaganathan said of him. Very few members of Sarvodaya are atheists although there are some nastikas. Many religious people worked with Gora for improvement in the lives of villagers, He had a particularly strong appeal for young people. Although he rejected God, religion and even reincarnation, he brought about a total consciousness of humanity wherever he went., In villages people are judged by their deeds, not their words, and that is why Gora was seen as a saint. Gora was unique.

But Gora was only unique as an atheist saint. In India, like all saints and sanyasis, he expressed himself through symbols, and behaviour which was instantly recognizable. He transcended local languages and local religions. His political identity was national not regional, although Andhra Pradesh was his main arena for action.

Early Years

Jayaprakash Narayan whose name means, "Victory to the light" was born in the early hours of October 11, 1902 in the remote

Bihar village of Sitabdiara. He was Phul Rani Devi's fourth child. His father Harsu Dayal has boasted about J.P., "My son will be a great man, some day." At the age of nine J.P. made his first break with the village and was admitted to the 7th class of the collegiate school at Patna. He continued to be retiring and intensely studious and by 1918 he had reached the final class. He sat for the 'State Public Matriculation Examination' and was awarded a District merit scholarship to Patna college.

JP was not religious but under the influence of the terrorist's fringe, he began to read regularly one of the most basic Hindu scriptures, Bhagvad Gita, deriving heroic inspiration from the great battle of the Mahabharat described in the book and from his overriding religious concept that man is immortal. This belief in immortality had become part of the terrorists intellectual disciplines. JP then became Swadeshi" (indigenous) in his attitudes, using handmade village shoes instead of the British manufactured ones and cleaning them with Indian mustered oil instead of with British shoe polish. He dressed himself in a Kurta, a home-spun, hand-woven material and an ascetically short dhoti (loose garment).

JP at 18, was married to Braj Kishore Prasad's daughter Prabhavati,14 in October 1920. Then Braj Kishore sent Prabhavati to live with Kasturba as a daughter in Gandhi's ashram at Ahmedabad.

Gandhi's nation-wide hartal in response of the Rowlatt Act, 1919, paralyzed economic life in man on April 1919. This was followed by the Khilafat movement together with his call for the non-co-operator movement on a nation-wide scale.

JP had joined the Patna college to appear for his second year science examination. However JP's dream of being part of his nation's revolt against the British rule in India left the college being funded by the British Government and joined the Bihar Vidyapith, a tertiary institution set up by Bihar Congress for all non-co-operation students.

In the meanwhile, Gandhi called off the non-co-operation movement in horror because the violent mob had killed twenty-two policemen in Uttar Pradesh at Chauri Chaura. The Indian

National Congress was outlawed and the non-co-operation subsided. JP felt completely crushed.

America & Marxism

An opportunity seemed to present to JP to go to the US for higher studies. He was assured that students from poor families could work their way through college. JP wrote to Prabhavati requesting her to accompany him. She refused and JP too realized that he could not support her abroad. However JP's departure was delayed for a year by his mother's clinging, affectionate opposition as well as her failing health. JP left India in 1922 and he was to be plunged in to entirely new experiences. JP reached San Francisco in October 1922 via Japan. He had his education in US for seven years from 1922-1929. In the beginning, JP worked in the fruit ranch setting out grapes to dry in the sun to be made into raisins in the factory. Then he joined the University of California at Berkley. He lived in a rented room, earning by working in restaurants, waiting at the tables; or washing dishes and by taking up odd jobs on Sundays. During the vacation, he again looked for work in the country-side.

JP began to find himself more interested in sociology than in science and to view his career in a different light. Because of his expectation of national revolution in India, he did not consider that a study of science would assist him much in his work as a revolutionary. Hence he enrolled himself in the social sciences at Wisconsin University, being the most progressive University in the US due to the influence of Robert La Folette. By day and night he poured over the writings of the bourgeoisie social scientist and radicals - Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Plekhanov and Rosa Luxemburg. He read the three volumes of Das Kapital and everything available in English that Marx had written.

He came to regard Marx then, as one of the greatest minds of the human race for his path finding work in Sociology. His intellectual interests were greatly broadened by the contacts with a group of Marxist-Leninists of the Madison home of a Russian Jewish tailor. He remained attentively alive to the writings of sociologists throughout the world. His studies proved so engrossing that he did not write to his family members or friends for a year

and they became exceedingly worried about him. However, he did write to Prabhavati, telling her that he had received an invitation to study in the Soviet-union, making again a personal request to accompany him on his visit to a Moscow. Prabhavati again refused to go with him. Finally JP was dissuaded by his father Braj Kishore from India for going to Moscow and becoming a Bolshevik. He graduated as a Bachelor of Arts. He was granted a post graduate scholarship. The subject of his thesis for his Master of Arts was "Social Variation". It was declared the best paper of the year. In it, he took the Marxist view point of dialectical & historical materialism. Then he planned to continue his studies until he had completed his Ph.D. But his dream did not become a reality, because he learnt that his mother was so ill from dropsy that she was bedridden. In the US in Wisconsin, he got acquainted to the writing of M.N.Roy that made on impact of his political mind and even aroused in him a suspicion of Gandhian thought. He read Roy's writings like "The Aftermath of Non-co-operation", "India in Transition". Naturally M. N. Roy had a great hand in moulding his thought and leading him to communism as a confirmed Marxist. Finally, he returned to India convinced that he central problem of human society was inequality of wealth, property, rank, culture and opportunities and the passage of time never obscured it'.

JP left for India in September, 1929 and reached India in November, 1929 at the age of twenty-seven, after seven year's stay in the US. His wife Prabhavati was living with Gandhi and had taken the vow of celibacy. JP respected his wife's decision. During this period the Nationalist Movement had reached its peak of frenzy. Gandhi was preparing for the next phase of struggle after independence. JP went to Wardha to see Gandhi and he met Jawaharlal Nehru also there. Jawaharlal Nehru was impressed by him and invited him to come to Allahabad and head the labour research department of INC. When JP returned to India in 1929, he was not interested in leading a comfortable life. He was determined to devote whole of life for the good of the people. Though JP was practically a committed Marxist, he was convinced that the communists in India must join the main stream of the struggle for National Liberation even if it was under the hegemony

of the so-called bourgeoisie. On his way back to India, he had met Clemenus Dutt, brother of Rajni Palme Dutt and other communist leaders in London and discussed with them the issue of India's freedom & revolution. JP, who had read Lenin's famous "Colonial thesis" calling upon the communists in the "Slave" countries to take active part in the national freedom struggle, was not convinced of Dutt's argument. Later when JP joined the nationalist freedom movement, he was surprised to find that Indian communists were following the line which Clemenus Dutt advocated. JP could not understand the rationality of the fight against the INC (Indian National Congress) which was fighting for the freedom of the country.

Congress Socialist Party-Birth of a Party

The second disobedience movement of 1932 saw Gandhi, Nehru and other important leaders being put behind the bars. JP became the active General Secretary of the Congress. He organized the underground office and directed the struggle in various parts of the country. Eventually, JP was also arrested in Madras in September, 1932 and was sent to Nasik Central Jail and was reported as "Congress brain arrested." In Nasik central jail he luckily met a number of young congress leaders, M. R. Masani, Achyut Patwardhan, N.C. Goray, Ashok Mehta, M.H.Dantwala, Charles Mascarenhas, C.K.Narayanswami. JP's first jail term in Nasik was to prove as much of a landmark in his life as his stay at the university of Wisconsin where he became a Marxist and a sympathizer of the communist party.

All of them had little to do except discuss politics and get to know one another. They agreed in the discussion that all history was a process of class-struggle and that proletarian revolutions were inevitable. The collapse of capitalism with all its brutalities was inescapable and would give birth to socialism as a matter of course. This was not an article of hope or faith but a scientifically demonstrable truth about society. The result of all these fervent discussions was the emergence of a new revolutionary party-the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) which pledged to infuse the freedom movement with socialist ideals. This party decided to work both within and outside the INC.

Here JP made his Marxist influence on the newly formed party. There was no doubt that CSP was not a homogeneous party of unified elements but they certainly united so far as the immediate goal of freedom was concerned. As JP was both a socialist and a nationalist, he tried his best to win over the communists and the Congress men for creating a broad Socialist front to fight imperialism. With the formation of the CSP, JP's life was devoted to encouraging groups of like-minded radicals throughout the country to set up branches and at the same time organizing & strengthening urban worker's and peasant's organizations. When the INC in 1934, decided to participate in elections to legislative assemblies, the CSP vehemently opposed it and restrained its members from contesting elections. However, among the Congressmen, the attraction of ministerial office rapidly obliterated the previous commitment to mass struggle. The CSP remained firm on its stand to emphasise on mass struggle.

Resist the Imperialist War

With the outbreak of the Second World War, JP and other socialist leaders believed that the pressure of freedom struggle might release forces that move and metamorphose the leadership. Hence, a mass struggle always threw up new leaders. In December, 1939 as general secretary of the CSP, JP called upon the people to take advantage of the war to stop British exploitation of India and to overthrow the British Government, to stop payment of rent and revenue; to establish their own government to organize a general strike and to stop the Tata Iron & Steel Company from supplying steel for the prosecution of the war. JP was arrested and imprisoned for nine months. After his release, JP met both Gandhi and S. C. Bose to bring about a rapprochement between the two. His efforts did not bear fruit. He was soon arrested and kept in Arthur Road Prison in Bombay and then sent to the Delhi Camp Jail. In his unsuccessful effort to smuggle out a packet of letters, the British Government falsely implicated him by charging that he had been plotting to bring about an armed insurrection in India.

However Gandhi's attitude towards JP was not one of anger. Gandhi held the British rule responsible for encouraging violent

& revolutionary feeling in the country. In August, 1942, Quit India war was launched by Gandhi. JP was still in Hazaribagh Central Jail. He was too restless to remain inside and escaped from the prison with five comrades by scaling down the prison walls. Throughout, the colonial period JP often advocated the use of arms in the struggle for freedom, contrary to the stand of Gandhi. Then JP left for Nepal and organized and trained an "Azad Dasta" (Freedom Brigade) there to paralyze the machinery of the British Government. Finally, he was again arrested in a running train in Punjab in September, 1943 and in December; he was declared a state prisoner.

He was kept in Lahore fort. He was subjected to in human tortures to get necessary information. In January, 1945, after 16 months, he was transferred to Agra Jail due to the great anger of the Indian people. Gandhi in the meantime made it clear to the Cabinet Mission that unless both JP and Dr. Lohia were unconditionally released. The negotiations would not start. Due to this both JP and Dr. Lohia were released in April 1946. The two men were given a heroic welcome by the people. JP was recognized as "The Heart of India", "The King of the Hearts of the youth." The CSP played a glorious and important role in the struggle that followed the "Quit India" movement. The politics at that time was marked by strife and petty jealousies among congressmen. Gandhi was again determined to launch a mass movement for the independence of India even without the support of the Congress leaders. JP at this juncture was certainly inclined towards Gandhi. JP also believed that the congress had taken a wrong line in adopting the constitutional method and ultimately agreeing to the Partition of the country. Hence, the partition came as a rude shock to the socialists, including JP.

3

Ram Manohar Lohia

Ram Manohar Lohia (1910-1967) was an Indian freedom fighter and a socialist political leader. He was born on March 23, 1910 in a village named Akbarpur in Faizabad district, Uttar Pradesh, in India.

EARLY LIFE

Lohia's father, Hari Lal, was a nationalist by spirit and a teacher by profession. His mother, Chanda, died when Ram was very young. He was introduced to the Indian Independence Movement at an early age by his father through the various protest assemblies Hari Lal took his son to. Lohia made his first contribution to the freedom struggle by organizing a small hartal on the death of Lokmanya Tilak.

Hari Lal, an ardent follower of Mahatma Gandhi, took his son along on a meeting with the Mahatma. This meeting deeply influenced Lohia and sustained him during trying circumstances and helped seed his thoughts, actions and love for swaraj. Ram was so impressed by Gandhiji's spiritual power and radiant self-control that he pledged to follow the Mahatma's footsteps. He proved his allegiance to Gandhi, and more importantly to the movement as a whole, by joining a satyagraha march at the age of ten.

Lohia met Jawaharlal Nehru in 1921. Over the years they developed a close friendship. Lohia, however, never hesitated to censure Nehru on his political beliefs and openly expressed disagreement with Nehru on many key issues. Lohia organized a student protest in 1928 to protest the all-white Simon Commission

which was to consider the possibility of granting India dominion status without requiring consultation of the Indian people.

Lohia attended the Banaras Hindu University to complete his intermediate course work after standing first in his school's matric examinations. In 1929, Lohia completed his B.A. from Calcutta University. He decided to attend Berlin University, Germany over all prestigious educational institutes in Britain to convey his dim view of British philosophy. He soon learned German and received financial assistance based on his outstanding academic performance.

FREEDOM FIGHTER

While in Europe, Lohia attended the League of Nations assembly in Geneva. India was represented by the Maharaja of Bikaner, an ally of the British Raj. Lohia took exception to this and launched a protest there and there from the visitors gallery. He fired several letters to editors of newspapers and magazines to clarify the reasons for his protest. The whole incident made Lohia a recognized figure in India overnight. Lohia helped organize the Association of European Indians and became secretary of the club. The main focus of the organization was to preserve and expand Indian nationalism outside of India.

Lohia wrote his Phd thesis paper on the topic of Salt Satyagraha, focusing on Gandhiji's socio-economic theory.

RETURN TO INDIA

Lohia joined the Indian National Congress as soon as he returned to India. Lohia was attracted to socialism and helped lay the foundation of Congress Socialist Party, founded 1934, by writing many impressive articles on the feasibility of a socialist India, especially for its journal, the 'Congress Socialist. When elected to the All India Congress Committee in 1936, Lohia formed a foreign affairs department for the first time. Nehru appointed Lohia as the first secretary of the committee. During the two years that he served he helped define what would be India's foreign policy.

In the onset of the Second World War, Lohia saw an opportunity to collapse the British Raj in India. He made a series of caustic speeches urging Indians to boycott all government

institutions. He was arrested on May 24, 1939, but released by authorities the very next day in fear of a youth uprising.

Soon after his release, Lohia wrote an article called "Satyagraha Now" in Gandhiji's newspaper, Harijan, on June 1, 1940. Within six days of the publication of the article, he was arrested and sentenced to two years of jail. During his sentencing the Magistrate said, "He (Lohia) is a top-class scholar, civilized gentleman, has liberal ideology and high moral character." In a meeting of the Congress Working Committee Gandhi said, "I cannot sit quiet as long as Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia is in prison. I do not yet know a person braver and simpler than him. He never propagated violence. Whatever he has done has increased his esteem and his honor." Lohia was mentally tortured and interrogated by his jailers. In December of 1941, all the arrested Congress leaders, including Lohia, were released in a desperate attempt by the government to stabilize India internally.

He vigorously wrote articles to spread the message of toppling the British imperialist governments from countries in Asia and Africa. He also came up with a hypothetical blueprint for new Indian cities that could self-administer themselves so well that there would not be need for the police or army.

QUIT INDIA

Gandhi and the Indian National Congress launched the Quit India movement in 1942. Prominent leaders, including Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad, were jailed. The "secondary cadre" stepped-up to the challenge to continue the struggle and to keep the flame for swaraj burning within the people's hearts. Leaders who were still free carried out their operations from underground. Lohia printed and distributed many posters, pamphlets and bulletins on the theme of "Do or Die" on his secret printing-press. Lohia, along with freedom fighter Usha Mehta, broadcast messages in Bombay from a secret radio station called Congress Radio for three months before detection, as a measure to give the disarrayed Indian population a sense of hope and spirit in absence of their leaders. He also edited Inquilab (Revolution), a Congress Party monthly along with Aruna Asaf Ali.

Lohia then went to Calcutta to revive the movement there. He changed his name to hide from the police who were closing in on him. Lohia fled to Nepal's dense jungles to evade the British. There he met, among other Nepalese revolutionaries, the Koirala brothers, who remained Lohia's allies for the rest of their lives.

Lohia was captured in May of 1944, in Bombay. Lohia was taken to a notorious prison in Lahore, where it is alleged that he underwent extreme torture. His health was destroyed but even though he was never as fit his courage and willpower strengthened through the ordeal. Under Gandhiji's pressure the Government released Lohia and his comrade Jayaprakash Narayan.

Following his release, Lohia decided to vacation with a friend in Goa. Once there, Lohia was alarmed to learn that the Portuguese government had introduced new curbs on the people's freedom of speech and assembly. He decided to deliver a speech to oppose the policy but was arrested even before he could reach the meeting location. The publicity served to force the Portuguese government to relent and it allowed the people the right to assemble. The Goan people weaved Lohia's tale of unselfish work for Goa in their folk songs.

As India's tryst with freedom neared, Hindu-Muslim strife increased. Lohia strongly opposed partitioning India in his speeches and writings. He appealed to communities in riot torn regions to stay united, ignore the violence surrounding them and stick to Gandhiji's ideals of non-violence. On the 15th of August, 1947, as the rest of India's leadership gathered in Delhi for the handover of power, Lohia stayed by Gandhiji's side as he mourned the effects of Partition.

Post Independence

Dr. Lohia favored Hindi as the official language of India, arguing,

"The use of English is a hindrance to original thinking, progenitor of inferiority feelings and a gap between the educated and uneducated public. Come, let us unite to restore Hindi to its original glory." Lohia decided to make the mass public realize the importance of economic robustness for the nation's future.

He encouraged public involvement in post-freedom reconstruction. He pressed people to construct canals, wells and roads voluntarily in their neighborhood. He volunteered himself to build a dam on river Paniyari which is standing till this day and is called "Lohia Sagar Dam." Lohia said "satyagraha without constructive work is like a sentence without a verb." He felt that public work would bring unity and a sense of awareness in the community.

As a democracy, the Parliament of India was obliged to listen to citizens' complaints. Lohia helped create a day called "Janavani Day" on which people from around the nation would come and present their grievances to members of Parliament. The tradition continues even today.

When he arrived in Parliament in 1963, the country had a one-party government through three general elections. Lohia shook things up. He had written a pamphlet, "25000 Rupees a Day", the amount spent on Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, an obscene sum in a country where the vast majority lived on 3 annas (less than one-quarter of a rupee) a day. Nehru demurred, saying that India's Planning Commission statistics showed that the daily average income was more like 15 annas (a little under a rupee) per day. Lohia demanded that this was an important issue, one that cried out for a special debate.

The controversy, still remembered in India as the "Teen Anna Pandrah Anna (3 annas -15 annas)" controversy.Member after member gave up his time to Lohia as he built his case, demolishing the Planning Commission statistics as fanciful. Not that the Commission was attempting to mislead, but the reality was that a small number of rich people were pulling up the average to present a wholly unrealistic picture.

At that time, Lohia's figure was true for over 70% of the population. Unlike the Marxist theories which became fashionable in the third world in the 50's and 60's, Lohia recognized that caste, more than class, was the huge stumbling block to India's progress.It was Lohia's thesis that India had suffered reverses throughout her history because people had viewed themselves as members of a caste rather than citizens of a country.

Caste, as Lohia put it, was congealed class. Class was mobile caste. As such, the country was deprived of fresh ideas, because of the narrowness and stultification of thought at the top, which was comprised mainly of the upper castes, Brahmins and Baniyas, and tight compartmentalization even there, the former dominant in the intellectual arena and the latter in the business. A proponent of affirmative action, he compared it to turning the earth to foster a better crop, urging the upper castes, as he put it, "to voluntarily serve as the soil for lower castes to flourish and grow", so that the country would profit from a broader spectrum of talent and ideas.

In Lohia's words, "Caste restricts opportunity. Restricted opportunity constricts ability. Constricted ability further restricts opportunity. Where caste prevails, opportunity and ability are restricted to ever-narrowing circles of the people".In his own party, the Samyukta (United) Socialist Party, Lohia promoted lower caste candidates both by giving electoral tickets and high party positions. Though he talked about caste incessantly, he was not a casteist -- his aim was to make sure people voted for the Socialist party candidate, no matter what his or her caste. His point was that in order to make the country strong, everyone needed to have a stake in it. To eliminate caste, his aphoristic prescription was, "Roti and Beti", that is, people would have to break caste barriers to eat together (Roti) and be willing to give their girls in marriage to boys from other castes (Beti).

Lohia was early to recognize that Marxism and Capitalism were similar in that both were proponents of the Big Machine. It was his belief that Big Industry was no solution for the third world (he even warned Americans, back in 1951, about their lives being taken over by big corporations). He called Marxism the "last weapon of Europe against Asia".

Propounding the "Principle of Equal Irrelevance", he rejected both Marxism and Capitalism, which were often presented as the only alternatives for third world nations. Nehru too had a similar view, at least insofar as he observed to Andre Malraux that his challenge was to "build a just society by just means". Lohia had a strong preference for appropriate technology, which would reduce drudgery but not put the common man at the mercy of far away forces. As early as 1951, he foresaw a time of the

'monotonic mind', with nothing much to do because the problems of living had been all addressed by technology.

Aside from the procedural revolution of non-violent civil disobedience, bridging the rich-poor divide, the elimination of caste and the revolution against incursions of the big-machine, other revolutions in Lohia's list included tackling Man-Woman inequality, banishing inequality based on color, and that of preserving individual privacy against encroachment of the collective.

Many of Lohia's revolutions have advanced in India, some with greater degrees of success than others. In some instances the revolutions have led to perverse results which he would have found distasteful. However,Lohia was not one to shy away from either controversy or struggle. Lohia believed that a party grew by taking up causes. He was a strong believer in popular action. In India's parliamentary system, where elections could be called even before the term was over, he once said that "Live communities don't wait for five years (the term of the parliament)", meaning that a government which misruled should be thrown out by the people. He carried out this idea by moving the first no-confidence motion against the Nehru government, which had by then been in office for 16 years!

Lohia is often called a maverick socialist, a cliched but nevertheless apt description.He gave that impression not to be controversial, but because he was always evolving his thoughts, and like his mentor, Gandhi, did not hesitate to speak the truth as he saw it. He often surprised both supporters and opponents. He astounded everyone by calling for India to produce the bomb, after the Chinese aggression of 1962. He was anti-English, saying that the British ruled India with bullet and language (bandhook ki goli aur angrezi ki boli).

Full of unforgettable phrases which would characterize a point of view, he captured who was a member of India's ruling class in with near-mathematical precision that have not been bettered in three decades -- "high-caste, wealth, and knowledge of English are the three requisites, with anyone possessing two of these belonging to the ruling class". The definition still holds.

Lohia wanted to abolish private schools and establish upgraded municipal (government) schools which would give equal academic opportunity to students of all castes. This, he hoped would help eradicate the divisions created by the caste system.

At the Socialist Party's Annual Convention, Lohia set up a plan to decentralize the government's power so that the general public would have more power in Indian politics. He also formed Hind Kisan Panchayat to resolve farmers' everyday problems.

Lohia was a socialist and wanted to unite all the socialists in the world to form a potent platform. He was the General Secretary of Praja Socialist Party. He established the World Development Council and eventually the World Government to maintain peace in the world.

During his last few years, besides politics, he spent hours talking to thousands of young adults on topics ranging from Indian literature to politics and art.

Lohia died on October 12, 1967 in New Delhi. He left behind no property or bank balance, just prudent contemplations.

Anecdotes

- While in school reading the prescribed history book, Lohia noted that the British author of the textbook referred to the Maharashtrian king Shivaji as a "bandit leader". Lohia researched the facts, and proved that the label "bandit leader" was an unjust description of the Maharaj. Lohia launched a campaign to have the description stricken from the textbook.
- When Lohia returned to India in 1933 from abroad, a comical situation arose. He had no money to reach his hometown from the airport. He quickly wrote a nationalistic article for The Hindu, one of the most popular and widely read newspapers, and got money to pay for the fare home.

Quotes

"Caste restricts opportunity. Restricted opportunity constricts ability. Constricted ability further restricts opportunity. Where caste prevails, opportunity and ability are restricted to ever-narrowing circles of the people".

The June 9, 1964 issue of Student Voice (published in Atlanta, GA), the newspaper of the SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordination Committee), carried the following news report:

"JACKSON, MISS. - A member of India's parliament was twice refused service at a Morrison's cafeteria here, and was escorted away by police, the second time in a patrol wagon. On both occasions May 27-28, Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia was accompanied by white persons and was dressed in native garb. Lohia was here visiting integrated Tougaloo College."

It was just like Rammanohar Lohia, who thought himself a world citizen, ready to fight injustice in Mississippi. He had participated in the Nepalese struggle against the Ranas and launched a Goan civil disobedience movement against Portuguese rule. His role in the Indian Freedom Movement was well known - 6 years in British jails, including spells of torture, in some 6 stints in prison. After independence and another dozen -- by the time of his first visit to the US in 1951, he had already been to jail twice in Free India. To Lohia this was normal -- he was always engaged in some cause, usually several. A strong advocate of civil disobedience and non-violence, he wrote that "A way must be found to combat injustice without weapons. That way has already been found. In the act of civil disobedience lies the irresistible impulse of man without weapons to justice and equality. Civil disobedience is armed reason".

During his 1951 trip to the US, Lohia spoke to audiences all across the south, including Montgomery (where one report says Rosa Parks was also in the audience) about Gandhi's method of non-violent non-cooperation.

A brilliant intellectual, a Ph.D. from Berlin (1932), fluent in English, German, French, Hindi and Bengali, he routinely fought battles on behalf of India's poorest, speaking out about injustice and poverty sharply and without let-up. When he arrived in Parliament in 1963, the country had had a one-party government through three general elections. Lohia shook things up. He had written a pamphlet, "25000 Rupees a Day", the amount spent on

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, an obscene sum in a country where the vast majority lived on 3 annas (less than one-quarter of a rupee) a day. Nehru demurred, saying that India's Planning Commision statistics showed that the daily average income was more like 15 annas (a little under a rupee) per day. Lohia demanded that this was an important issue, one that cried out for a special debate.

The controversy, still remembered in India as the "Teen Anna Pandrah Anna (3 annas -15 annas)" controversy, saw something akin to the tense excitement of "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington". Member after member gave up his time to Lohia as he built his case, demolishing the Planning Commission statistics as fanciful. Not that the Commission was attempting to mislead, but the reality was that a small number of rich people were pulling up the average to present a wholly unrealistic picture. At that time, Lohia's figure was true for over 70% of the population.

Unlike the Marxist theories which became fashionable in the third world in the 50's and 60's, Lohia recognized that caste, more than class, was the huge stumbling block to India's progress. Then as today, caste was politically incorrect to mention in public, but most people practiced it in all aspects of life -- birth, marriage, association and death. It was Lohia's thesis that India had suffered reverses throughout her history because people had viewed themselves as members of a caste rather than citizens of a country. Caste, as Lohia put it, was congealed class. Class was mobile caste. As such, the country was deprived of fresh ideas, because of the narrowness and stultification of thought at the top, which was comprised mainly of the upper castes, Brahmins and Baniyas, and tight compartmentalization even there, the former dominant in the intellectual arena and the latter in the business. A proponent of affirmative action, he compared it to turning the earth to foster a better crop, urging the upper castes, as he put it, "to voluntarily serve as the soil for lower castes to flourish and grow", so that the country would profit from a broader spectrum of talent and ideas.

In Lohia's words, "Caste restricts opportunity. Restricted opportunity constricts ability. Constricted ability further restricts opportunity. Where caste prevails, opportunity and ability are restricted to ever-narrowing circles of the people". In his own

party, the Samyukta (United) Socialist Party, Lohia promoted lower caste candidates both by giving electoral tickets and high party positions. Though he talked about caste incessantly, he was not a casteist -- his aim was to make sure people voted for the Socialist party candidate, no matter what his or her caste. His point was that in order to make the country strong, everyone needed to have a stake in it. To eliminate caste, his aphoristic prescription was, "Roti and Beti", that is, people would have to break caste barriers to eat together (Roti) and be willing to give their girls in marriage to boys from other castes (Beti).

Lohia was early to recognize that Marxism and Capitalism were similar in that both were proponents of the Big Machine. It was his belief that Big Industry was no solution for the third world (he even warned Americans, back in 1951, about their lives being taken over by big corporations).

He called Marxism the "last weapon of Europe against Asia". Propounding the "Principle of Equal Irrelevance", he rejected both Marxism and Capitalism, which were often presented as the only alteratives for third world nations. Nehru too had a similar view, at least insofar as he observed to Andre Malraux that his challenge was to "build a just society by just means". Lohia had a strong preference for appropriate technology, which would reduce drudgery but not put the common man at the mercy of far away forces. As early as 1951, he foresaw a time of the 'monotonic mind', with nothing much to do because the problems of living had been all addressed by technology.

Aside from the procedural revolution of non-violent civil disobedience, bridging the rich-poor divide, the elimination of caste and the revolution against incursions of the big-machine, other revolutions in Lohia's list included tackling Man-Woman inequality, banishing inequality based on color, and that of preserving individual privacy against encroachment of the collective.

George Will once wrote that though every city in the US had some monument to Jefferson, there was no comparable memorial for Hamilton. He added, "If you want to see the Hamilton Memorial, just look around you. You live in it". We can similarly say though not attributed to him, many of Lohia's revolutions

have advanced in India, some with greater degrees of success than others. In some instances the revolutions have led to perverse results which he would have found distasteful. But Lohia wasn't one to shy away from either controversy or struggle. Unlike the democrats in our current Congress who adopt the Rodney King motto of "Can't we all just get along", Lohia believed that a party grew by taking up causes. He was a strong believer in popular action. In India's parliamentary system, where elections could be called even before the term was over, he once said that "Live communities don't wait for five years (the term of the parliament)", meaning that a government which misruled should be thrown out by the people. He carried out this idea by moving the first no-confidence motion against the Nehru government, which had by then been in office for a 16 years!

Lohia is often called a maverick socialist, a cliched but nevertheless apt description. But he gave that impression not to be controversial, but because he was always evolving his thoughts, and like his mentor, Gandhi, did not hesitate to speak the truth as he saw it. He often surprised both supporters and opponents. He astounded everyone by calling for India to produce the bomb, after the Chinese aggression of 1962. He was anti-English, saying that the British ruled India with bullet and language (bandhook ki goli aur angrezi ki boli). Full of unforgettable phrases which would characterize a point of view, he captured who was a member of India's ruling class in with near-mathematical precision that I have not seen bettered in three decades -- "high-caste, wealth, and knowledge of English are the three requisites, with anyone possessing two of these belonging to the ruling class". The definition still holds.

Rammanohar Lohia was regarded by friend and foe alike as an honest, brilliant, and profound man. He inspired deep loyalty and enormous respect, and to his followers, the words "Doctor Sahib" would conjure up only one image. He lived and died in simplicity, owning nothing. His death was a huge loss to India, for she had lost her one of her finest political minds. He was only 57.

Ram Manohar Lohia was born on March 23, 1910 in a village named Akbarpur in the District of Faizabad. Ram's father, Hira

Lal, was a nationalist by spirit and a teacher by profession. His mother, Chanda, died when Ram was very young. Ram was introduced to the Indian freedom struggle at an early age by his father through the various protest assemblies Hari Lal took his son to. Ram made his first contribution to the freedom struggle by organizing a small hartal on the death of Lokmanya Tilak.

Hari Lal, an ardent follower of Gandhiji, took his son along on a meeting with the Mahatama. This meeting deeply influenced Lohia and sustained him during trying circumstances and helped seed his thoughts, actions and love for swaraj. Ram was so impressed by Gandhiji's spiritual power and radiant self-control that he pledged to follow the Mahatma's footsteps. He proved his allegiance to Gandhiji, and more importantly to the movement as a whole, by joining a satyagraha march at the age of ten!

While in school reading the prescribed history book, Lohia noted that the British author of the textbook referred to the great Maharashtrian king Chatrapati Maharaj Shivaji as a "bandit leader" (lutera sardar). Lohia researched the facts and proved that the label "bandit leader" was an unjust description of the Maharaj. Lohia launched a campaign to have the description striken from the textbook. Lohia organized a student protest in 1918 to protest the all-white Simon Commission which was to consider the possibility of granting India dominion status without requiring consultation of the Indian people.

Lohia met Jawaharlal Nehru in 1921. Over the years they developed a close friendship Lohia, however, never hesitated to censure Nehru on his political beliefs and openly expressed disagreement with Nehru on many key issues.

Lohia attended the Banaras Hindu University to complete his intermediate course work after standing first in his school's metric examinations. In 1929, Lohia completed his B.A. from Calcutta University. He decided to attend Berlin University, Germany over all prestigious educational institutes in Britain to convey his dim view of British philosophy. He soon learned German and received financial assistance based on his outstanding academic performance. While in Europe, Lohia attended the League of Nations assembly in Geneva. India was represented by the Maharaja of Bikaner, a well known puppet of the British Raj.

Lohia took exception to this and launched a protest there and there from the visitors gallery. He fired several letters to editors of newspapers and magazines to clarify the reasons for his protest. The whole incident made Lohia a recognized figure in India overnight. Lohia helped organize the Association of European Indians and became secretary of the club. The main focus of the organization was to preserve and expand Indian nationalism outside of India.

Lohia wrote his Phd thesis paper on the topic of "Salt Satyagraha," focusing on Gandhiji's socio-economic theory.

When Lohia returned to India in 1933, a comical situation arouse. Ram had no money to reach his hometown from the airport. He quickly wrote a nationalistic article for "The Hindu," the most popular and widely read newspaper and got money to pay for the fare home.

Lohia joined the Indian National Congress as soon as he returned home. Lohia was attracted to socialism and helped lay the foundation of Congress Socialist Party, founded 1934, by writing many impressive articles on the feasibility of a socialist India. Lohia formed a new branch in the Indian National Congress--the All India Congress Committee (a foreign affairs department). Nehru appointed Lohia as the first secretary of the committee. During the two years that he served he helped define what would be India's foreign policy.

In the onset of the Second World War Lohia saw an opportunity to collapse the British Raj in India. He made a series of caustic speeches urging Indians to boycott all government institutions. He was arrested on May 24, 1939, but released by authorities the very next day in fear of a youth uprising.

Soon after his release, Lohia wrote an article called "Satyagraha Now" in Gandhiji's newspaper, Harijan on June 1, 1940. Within six days of the publication of the article, he was arrested and sentenced to two years of jail. During his sentencing the Magistrate said, "He (Lohia) is a top-class scholar, civilized gentleman, has liberal ideology and high moral character." In a meeting of Congress Committee Gandhiji said, "I cannot sit quiet as long as Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia is in prison. I do not yet know a person braver

and simpler than him. He never propagated violence. Whatever he has done has increased his esteem and his honor." Lohia was mentally tortured and interrogated by his jailers. On December of 1941, all the arrested Congress leaders, including Lohia, were released in a desperate attempt by the government to stabilize India internally.

He rigorously wrote articles to spread the message of toppling the British imperialist governments from countries in Asia and Africa. He also came up with a hypothetical blueprint for new Indian cities that could self-administer themselves so well that there would not be need for the police or army.

Gandhiji and the Indian National Congress launched the Quit India movement in the 1942. Prominent leaders, including Gandhiji, Nehru, Azad and Patel, were jailed. The "secondary cadre" stepped-up to the challenge to continue the struggle and to keep the flame for swaraj burning within the people's hearts. Leaders who were still free carried out their operations from underground. Lohia printed and distributed many posters, pamphlets and bulletins on the theme of "Do or Die," on his secret printing-press. Lohia along with freedom fighter Usha Mehta, broadcast messages in Bombay for three whole months before detection from a secret radio station called "Congress Radio" as a measure to give the disarrayed Indian population a sense of hope and spirit in absence of their leaders.

Lohia went to Calcutta to revive the movement there. He changed his name to hide from the police who were closing in on him. Lohia fled to Nepal's dense jungles to evade the British. There he met he Nepalese people and Koirala brothers (courageous freedom fighters in Nepal), who remained Lohia's allies rest of their lives

Lohia was captured in May of 1944, in Bombay. Lohia was taken to a prison in Lahore, notoriously known throughout India for its tormenting environment. In the prison he underwent extreme torture. His health was destroyed but his courage remained. Even though he was not as fit his courage and willpower strengthened through the ordeal. Under Gandhiji's pressure the Government released Lohia and his comrade Jayaprakash Narayan. A huge crowd waited to give the 2 a heroes welcome. Lohia decided to visit his friend in Goa to relax. Lohia was alarmed to

learn that the Portuguese government had censured the peoples freedom of speech and assembly. He decided to deliver a speech to oppose the policy but was arrested even before he could reach the meeting location. The Portuguese government relented and allowed the people the right to assemble. The Goan people weaved Lohia's tale of unselfish work for Goa in their folk songs. As India tryst wit freedom neared Hindu-Muslim strife increased. Lohia strongly opposed partitioning India in his speeches and writings. He appealed to communities in riot torn regions to stay united, ignore the violence surrounding them and stick to Gandhiji's ideals of non-violence. Lohia comforted the Mahatama as nation that once wielded the power of non-violence took refuge in killing their own brothers and sisters. Lohia remained beside Gandhiji as son would remain beside a father.

Dr. Lohia was the first to introduce the unification of some 650 Indian princely states together to form larger states, an idea later adopted by Sardar Patel, first Home Minister of India. Lohia favored Hindi as the official language of India, arguing, "The use of English is a hindrance to original thinking, progenitor of inferiority feelings and a gap between the educated and uneducated public. Come, let us unite to restore Hindi to its original glory."

He was one of the greatest thinkers the Indian Parliament would ever see. He realized that the prevailing poverty would create an India with a weak foundation. As an economically crippled India tried to find ways to get rid herself of its abject poverty, Lohia decided to make the mass public realize the importance of economic robustness for the nation's future.

He encouraged public involvement in post-freedom reconstruction. He pressed people to construct canals, wells and roads voluntarily in their neighborhood. He volunteered himself to build a dam on river Paniyari which is standing till this day and is called "Lohia Sagar Dam." Lohia said, "satyagraha without constructive work is like a sentence without a verb." He felt that public work would bring unity and a sense of awareness in the community. He also was instrumental in having 60 percent of the seats in the legislature reserved for minorities, lower classes, and women. As a democracy, the Indian Parliament was obliged to listen to citizens' complaints. Lohia helped create a day called

"Janavani Day" on which people from around the nation would come and present their grievances to Members of Parliament. The tradition continues even today.

Lohia wanted to abolish private schools and establish upgraded municipal (government) schools which would give equal academic opportunity to students of all casts. This he hoped would help eradicate the divisions created by the caste system.

At the Socialist Party's Annual Convention, Lohia set up a plan to decentralize the government's power so that the general public would have more power in Indian politics. He also formed Hind Kisan Panchayat to resolve farmers' everyday problems.

Lohia was a socialist and wanted to unite all the socialists in the world to form a potent platform. He was the General Secretary of Praja Socialist Party. He established the World Development Council and eventually the World Government to maintain peace in the world. During his last few years, besides politics, he spent hours talking to thousands of young-adults on topics ranging from Indian literature, politics and art.

Lohia died on October 12, 1967 in New Delhi. He left behind no property or bank balance but prudent contemplations.

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The socialist leader of a fearless and dynamic personality. Both before independence and in free India he went to prison several times for the sake of the people. A man of rare scholarship and independent thought he toiled to create a society which would ensure justice to the poor, the backward and women

A Student in the Motherland's Service

Lohia was born in 1910. His father, Heeralal, was a merchant in Faizabad, in Uttar Pradesh. Ram Manohar's mother died when he was two years old. The boy'sgrandmother brought him up. His father was a devoted follower of Mahatma Gandhi. Ram Manohar

saw Gandhi for the first time when he was only nine years old. The Indian National Congress held its plenary session in 1923 at Gaya in Bihar. Little Lohia was a Congress volunteer there. He attended also the 1926 session at Gauhati.

Lohia received his education in Bombay, Benares and Calcutta. He passed the Metriculation Examination in the first class in 1925. After a two-year course at Benares University, he joined the Vidyasagar College in Calcutta. In 1929 he passed the Honors Examination in English Literature. Even in his student days he was attracted towards political agitation. He went to Germany for higher studies. Hitler was in power at that time. Lohia wrote his doctoral thesis. In Berlin University; his subject was the Salt Satyagraha in India. He was awarded the Doctorate in both Economics and Political Science. He returned to India in 1932.

The Congress Socialist Party

The Satyagraha or Disobedience Movement launched by Gandhi was spreading throughout the country. Lohia plunged into the movement. The reward he got was imprisonment.

Just then, the younger members of the Congress Party began to feel that the elders were not moving fast enough. Some of those youngsters had been imprisoned in the Nasik Road Jail. They had great compassion for the poor, the peasantry and the working class. These youngsters were determined to strive for the cause of such people. So they formed a youth wing in the Congress and called it the Congress Socialist Party. Among the founders of this Party were such stalwarts as Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Yusuf Meherally, Achut Patwardhan, Ashok Mehta, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya and Acharya Narendra Deva. These people dreamt of building a nation for the toiling millions. In order to achieve this, they decided to put an end to the British rule.

Lohia became the editor of a periodical the "Congress Socialist'. With his western education, Lohia was very well versed in international affairs. The Congress established a new branch for external affairs. Lohia had to look after its administration. Lohia made it possible for the Congress to have contact with all the progressive thinkers of different nations of the world. He opened

a separate cell in order to protect the interests of Indians abroad. In 1936, Lohia was elected a member of the All India Congress Committee. He traveled all over the country and drew young men into the freedom movement. The British imprisoned him in 1938 in Calcutta on charges of sedition.

The Second World War broke out in 1939. The British Government forcibly involved India in the war. Lohia was against the war. For his antiwar speeches, the British again put him behind the bars in 1940.

It was 1942. Gandhi gave a call to the nation and threw a challenge to the British. "Quit India" said he. On the seventh and the eighth of August that year, the All India Congress Committee met in Bombay. The Quit India Movement was launched. On the 9th of August early in the morning the British Government imprisoned all national leaders headed by Gandhi, who coined a magic slogan, "Do or die". Spellbound by this slogan, the entire nation stood up against the British. Many of the national leaders evaded the police and organized the movement. Lohia was among the foremost.

He started a secret Broadcasting station and, with Jayaprakash Narayan, he organized an underground movement.

The government imprisoned Lohia again in 1944. In the prison he was tortured in several ways. Each day he would be put in handcuffs of different sizes and weights; he would be made to listen to a single word, repeated for hours on end in the officer's chambers; he would be forbidden to close his eyes all night; the moment he closed his eyes his head would be twisted or the handcuffs pulled; for several nights the police would keep knocking a table by his bed with a piece of iron; they would call the national leaders names in his presence. Once an officer was calling Gandhi names. Weary and exasperated by the torture Lohia roared at him to shut up. The officer made a fuss but thereafter he never opened his mouth again.

Lohia was at last released from the prison in 1946. At that time India's freedom was in sight. But freedom from the clutches of the British did not mean freedom from the Portugese. These Portugese imperialists had been ruling three small pockets of territory, Goa,

Diu and Daman, for four hundred and fifty years. Their rule was more frightful than that of the British. Lohia turned his attention to Goa as soon as he was released from prison. He went to Belgaum in Karnataka. When he entered Goa, the Portugese Government arrested and deported him. Thus Lohia laid the foundation for the liberation of Goa from foreign domination.

In the north at the foot of the Himalayas was the Kingdom of Nepal ruled by the Rana Dynasty. The youth of Nepal were educated at Benares. Lohia became their Political 'guru' or mentor. The revolt against the Rana Dynasty in Nepal was inspired by none other than Lohia himself.

The Socialist Party

August 15, 1947. India became free. But then it was divided. Lohia was unhappy on this account. Gandhi was murdered on the 30th of January 1948. The communal virus spread all over the country. The Congress Socialist Party was not happy with the way in which the Congress leaders dealt with the situation. The Socialist Party decided to bring together the peasants, the factory workers and the workers in the middle class. On the 15th of April that year, the Socialists left the Congress Party. They formed their own party. One of the top leaders of the party was Lohia.

Thereafter Lohia toured the whole country. He strongly criticized the policies of the Nehru Government. In his inimitable style he argued in favor of the stand and the policies of the Socialist Party. He stole the hearts of the youth of the country.

In Kagodu in Karnataka

It was an important event that brought Lohia in close contact with Karnataka. Shimoga is a district of Karnataka Sagar is a taluk in the district well known for its exquisite sandal woodcarving. There is a small village in this taluk called Kagodu.

There was only one landlord in the entire village. The rest of the villagers were all tenants or hired peasants of the landlord. Their economic and social conditions were deplorable. The peasants were afraid even to stand before the landlord. They had to wear the dhoti above the ankle. Women were forbidden to wear sarees that cover:nd the leg below the knee. They all had to toil in the

landlord's house but without payment. They could not ever dream of education. The dumb toilers accepted their lot as the will of fate.

A new wind blew across the region after the attainment of freedom. The peasantry awoke. They realized that the too were human beings. They formed unions. But the landlords did not like all this. Suppose these people who had been trampled upon for ages turned against the landlords? Fear gripped the landlords' minds. The peasants were evicted from the lands they had been cultivating. In 1951, the peasants organized themselves. They decided to fight injustice. The Farmers' Union and the Socialist Party of Karnataka launched a satyagraha against the landlords' injustice. Many farmers got into their fields in-groups to fight for their rights. The Government took the side of the landlords. Led by the socialist party, farmers poured in hundreds into the jails in Sagar and Shimoga.

The news reached Lohia in the month of July 1951. He rushed to Karnataka. Accompanied by the local leaders, he went straight from Bangalore to Sagar. From Sagar off to the village of Kagodu. Since it was the monsoon season, there was incessant rainfall. On the 12th of July the weather was slightly better in the afternoon. With the flag of the Socialist Party in one hand, Lohia led the peasants and got into the fields. He launched the Satyagraha. The atmosphere was quiet but tense when the procession went through the streets of the village. Soon after the procession, Lohia arrived at the resthouse of the Sagar Railway Station. It was around midnight. Senior police officials of the district came there and arrested Lohia.

Lohia sat through the whole night along with his jailmates in the police lockup in Sagar. The next morning he was brought to the Shimoga jail along with other leaders! There were already quite a few satyagrahis in the jail. That evening Lohia was taken to Bangalore and kept in confinement in the Government House. When an appeal was made to the High Court, Lohia was released.

Humanity

While in the Shimoga jail, the inmates were not being given enough food. The food given to them sufficed only for one meal a day. The satygrahis had to depend on the food sent from outside

by supporters. Lohia was deeply moved at this state of affairs. But he had little money with him. He had hardly thirty-two rupees in his purse. When the police officials came to take him to Bangalore, Lohia handed over to his jailmates all the money he had. "Please get some food with this money and distribute it among the satyagrahis" he said. His friends tried hard to dissuade him but in vain.

It was not only in Karnataka that Lohia participated in peasants' agitations. He participated in all the agitations of the downtrodden throughout the country. He was in the vanguard in every fight for the working class against all forms of injustice. He had not only pity for the common man but respect as well.

Once he travelled by train from Sagar to Shimoga in a third class compartment. He was accompanied by some party workers of the Socialist Party. Some of them stretched their legs ignoring the inconvenience to those in the opposite row. There were some farmers in that row. Lohia could not control his displeasure. He said to the man next to him "This conduct does not befit a socialist. Explain this to the other friends." Such was Lohia's alertness even in seemingly trivial matters

The Praja Socialist Party

The first General Elections in free India were held in 1952. The Socialist party fielded its candidates all over the country. Doctor Lohia did not contest. He toured all the states to explain the aims of his party. He visited the erstwhile Mysore State too and addressed many public meetings. The election did not bring much success to the Socialist Party. Within a year the Socialist Party and the Kisan Mazdoor Party founded by Acharya Kripalani merged. The new party was named the Praja Socialist Party. Acharya Kripalani became the President of the party. Doctor Lohia was the General Secretary. Earlier, when Acharya Kripalani was the General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee, Lohia had been the head of the External Affairs Department of the Congress Party. Lohia stayed with Kripalani's family and parctically became one of them. Thus Kripalani developed great affection for Lohia.

During this period, Travancore and Cochin, the two princely states, had been merged to form a single state. The Praja Socialist

Party was in power and Pattamthanu Pillai was the Chief Minister. Once there was an agitation by estate workers. The Govern- ment resorted to firing. Lohia could not condone this action of the Government headed by his own party. His contention was that the so-called people's party had no right to misuse its powers and to use repression against its own people. He demanded that the Praja Socialist Party Government should resign immediately. He even took a firm stand on the issue. Many leaders in the party did not want to accept his stand. But Lohia did not budge. Finally in 1955 the Praja Socialist Party took disciplinary action against Lohia.

The New Party

In the field of social revolution Lohia was a galvanizing personality. Vast numbers of young men and women were attracted to his way of thinking. They resented the disciplinary action against Lohia. The idea of rebuilding the erstwhile Socialist Party began to take shape. In 1955, towards the end of Decemeber, the socialist Lohiaites met in Hyderabad to exchange views. At last the Socialist Party was reborn. It was the midnight of the 31st of December 1955. The City of Hyderabad witnessed a torch light procession which symbolized the birth of the new party.

The Socialist Party chalked out a specific programme. Lohia was the author of this programme. He explained the fundamental aims of the party and clarified its practical approach. He started 'Mankind', an English daily from Hyderabad, which voiced his views. He also started 'Jana' -a Hindi monthly.

Lohia's Views

Lohia was an exceptionally talented person. He had mastered different schools of social and political doctrines. He was deeply influenced by thinkers of the West. Prominent among them was Karl Marx. Gandhis' concept of Satyagraha had made a strong impact on India. Lohia was impressed by the way in which millions of unarmed Indians fought the mighty British. He advocated the realization of socialist ideals through Satyagraha. He firmly believed that the differences between the haves and the havenots, the rich and the poor could be resolved by nonviolent means. Huge mechanization may be useful in advanced regions like

Europe and America. India is a land of teeming, millions. The biggest problem is to provide jobs for millions. Hence using small machinery is the only solution. There are, of course, differences between Capitalism and Communism, but both rely on large-scale use of heavy machines. Mere change of ownership does not bring about equality. The very idea of mechanised industry should be changed. Such were Lohia's views.

Lohia had definite views regarding Indian languages. English is a language known to a negligible minority. Hence Lohia strongly contended that it should no longer be used for purposes of administration. In a democracy the language of the people should be the language of the government. Only then the public can understand what the government does and nobody will be at a disadvantage for not knowing English.

The regional language should be the medium of instruction in schools and colleges. It is easier for children to learn through their own mother tongue. Spending several years to teach English which is not our language is sheer waste of time. In spite of spending so much time we are unable to master this language. People who know English begin to think they are different from others. These people are parasites. English Language has created a gulf between the intellectuals and the common man. So, the regional languages should be used in all walks of life. They should be given priority in courts, in the bazaar, and in all walks of life. These were the views of Lohia.

More than half of our population comprises women. Their condition is pathetic. Cooking food, breeding children and being a slave to her husband -this is woman's fate. A woman is not considered equal to a man, such is the blind belief sustained through the ages. The law has guaranteed equality to women, but that is only on paper. Equality has not been practiced. Hence jobs must be reserved for women in all walks of life. They must be freed from the tyranny of homework. The latent talent of women should be brought to the limelight. Society does not progress as long as women remain oppressed. Society must be rid of deep-rooted beliefs and old practices. Beginning with women in villages every woman should be given justice. Lohia strove for this cause. According to him the emancipation of women was the foundation

of social revolution; without this there can be no prosperity Lohia had earned fame as an expert in international affairs. He felt that India should not join the camp of either Russia or America. She must remain nonaligned. This, however, should not mean transferring India's approval from one country to another. It was his view that the free countries of Asia and Africa should form a third force.

Men should not hate one another because of the color of the skin. Racial hatred is treachery to mankind. All men are equal. Lohia was a firm adherent of this ideology. This was why Lohia staged satyagraha in an episode involving racialist prejudices in a restaurant in Jackson a town in America. He was arrested at the time.

In his life span of 57 years Ram Manohar Lohia suffered imprisonment twenty times. The government of free India imprisoned him as many as twelve times. As a staunch believer in satyagraha he felt it was his duty to fight injustice, whether it was on a small scale or a big scale.

Lohia never had faith in violence. By nature as well as training he was nonviolent. He abhorred destructive tendencies. He never lost patience. Time and again he made it clear that nonviolence was not a facade for cowardice. It is our tradition as Indians to remain gentle for a century and than to pounce like a tiger in a matter of seconds. He advised people to hold their heads high always like human beings. He followed what he preached. He never bowed to any force on earth.

"I prefer the spade to the throne" said Lohia. We should build up our nation. Our country has a huge population. We do not have big machinery. But we have plenty of manpower. Hence we must utilize it to the fullest extent. That will be possible only it every one wields the spade. If every healthy person donates an hour's labor a day to the cause of the nation, our country will soon be rich. In his life the spade and the prison were like the two sides of a coin.

"A Daily Income of Twenty-one Paise"

Lohia contested the 1962 General Elections to the Lok Sabha from Phulpur constituency in Uttar Pradesh. His rival was the

then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Lohia lost the election. But such was his courage that he would challenge even the mightiest men of the land.

In May 1963 there was a by election from Farookabad constituency in Uttar Pradesh. Lohia contested and Won, and entered the Lok Sabha. It was his desire that the Lok Sabha should mirror public opinion. His maiden speech itself was historic. The daily income of twenty-seven crore people of this country is a meagre twenty-one paise, declared Lohia in the Lok Sabha, to the utter astonishment of government spokesmen. He argued that top priority should be given to the improvement of the condition of such poor people. Every one was astonished when Lohia disclosed that this poor country spent as much as twenty-five thousand rupees a day on the security of the Prime Minister. He wrote a book elaborating his statements. He argued that popular leaders should not alienate themselves from the common man.

Simple Living

Lohia was a leader but a man of simple living. He disliked ostentation. His personal belongings were few. He never paid much attention to his attire. Once while he was on tour he opened his suitcase to find all his shirts were torn. New shirts had to be brought from the market. Lohia never bothered about his needs.

One terrible curse of our country is caste.

There are many rungs in the caste system. Any one who has wealth or belongs to one of the higher castes or knows English can prosper. But there are millions in this country who are not so fortunate. The Government should reserve sixty per cent of jobs for women and people belonging to backward communities. The same policy should apply to places in political life. This was the firm stand of Lohia.

Equality of opportunity - this is a sound principle. But when people who have been oppressed for ages are asked to compete with people belonging to forward communities the latter are bound to succeed. Hence it is but right that those who are backward should be given special opportunities. Lohia based all his programs on this doctrine. From times immemorial there has been a gulf between profession and practice in India. Lohia stressed the need

to bridge this gulf between word and deed. Henever owned any property. Until he became a member of the Lok Sabha he never had any income. His friends and well wishers looked after him.

His house in Delhi was always open to the party workers. Lohia was returned to Lok Sabha from Kanoz constituency in 1967. In September 1967, he underwent an operation. But he never recovered from it. On the 12th of October 1967 Lohia breathed his last.

A Versatile Genius

Lohia was a versatile genius. He had a sharp intellect. He wielded a sharp pen and he was a very effective and persuasive speaker. While addressing public gatherings he always spoke in Hindi. His speech used to be translated into the language of the region. He knew English, German and French very well. He was also proficient in Bengali. He was a man of incisive logic. Once he chooses a subject he would make a thorough study of it. He had special love for economics. And no one could deceive him with mere statistics.

He wrote quite a number of books. "Marx, Gandhi and Socialism" is his masterpiece. "Culprits of the Division of Bharat", "Wheel of History", "Leisure amidst Politics", and "Power Determination" are some of his other works.

Generally at meetings and conferences the leaders are on the stage. Lohia was an exception. He always sat with the Delegates. Once there was a special plenary session of the Praja Socialist Party in a town in Madhya Pradesh. The Party was discussing whether it should co- operate with the Congress. Ashok Mehta argued in favor of co-operation; Lohia was against such co-operation. His argument was clear; his words touched every heart. At last Jaya Prakash Narayan declared that he would inform Nehru that it was not possible for the party to co-operate with the Congress, and ended the discussion. Thus Lohia won over the entire gathering.

'Rama, Krishna, Shiva'

Although basically a politician Lohia had an excellent knowledge of our ancient scriptures. He used to interpret them

from a modern point of view. He wrote a perceptive article on the mythological figures Rama, Krishna and Shiva. Many of his observations in his article are penetrating and significant. He says, "Rama and Krishna may be historical figures. Shiva also may have been a great engineer who dug a canal of the river Ganga. Perhaps he was a veterinary doctor or a great lover of mankind. He has said that the mythological figures embody the dreams and the trials and sufferings of the people who conceived them. Only some people know about the figures of history. But mythological characters have become part and parcel of the popular imagination, and Lohia had grasped this fact.

Lohia had great love for Rama and Ramayana. He called Rama "an embodiment of dignity". He organized a Ramayana Mela near Ayodhya. His birthplace Faizabad is close to Ayodhya.

What Lohia has to say about Sri Rama and Sri Krishna is significant. "Eight parts of Vishnu were embodied in Rama. His was a limited personality. But Krishna had sixteen parts of Vishnu. Hence his personality was as mighty as the ocean." Lohia wrote that Rama said little but listened to others.

To-day cricket is the most popular game in India, especially in towns and cities. This is a game of the leisurely class. It is a gift of the British Raj. Cricket does not offer as much exercise as football. Lohia wanted that India should progress in sports so as to earn recognition in the Olympic Games. But he did not think highly of cricket.

With Vishveshvaraya

Lohia once met Bharatha Rathna Mokshagundam Vishveshvaraya, the great engineer-statesman, when he came to Bangalore. Vishveshvaraya was ninety years old. Lohia writes that after Mahatma Gandhi Vishveshvaraya was the second great man of India. Lohia recalls that in the hundred- minute meeting he found that Vishvesh- varaya's memory never failed him. He is all praise for Sir M.V.'S sharp intellect, his life of hard work and his tidiness even in old age. Vishveshvaraya told him that Indian steel was being sold in Glasgow in England even a hundred years ago and that it was possible to manufacture steel of any grade as a small scale industry. He told Lohia that he had no difficulty in

preparing the designs for the Cauvery Valley projects as he had visited the Aswan Dam Project in Egypt.

Lohia evinced interest in such matters as language and education. He studied the similarity in the scripts of different Indian languages. It was his desire to design a single script for all Indian languages. He felt that different scripts wasted the country's time and money and divided the people. He wished that we had a single script as in Europe.

Lohia was a very widely traveled man. It was his wish to go round the world without a passport; he did visit Burma once without a passport.

Decentralization

All the political power is concentrated in the hands of the Central Government today. The states are left with very little power; there is no self-government at the district, taluk and village levels. The citizens of the country electrepresentatives to the Lok Sabha and the state assemblies once in five years. Once elected the representatives cannot be questioned by the common man. Lohia felt that this state of affairs was unsatisfactory in a democracy. He suggested a different solution. The suggestion was that there should be decentralization of power at all the four stages - at the center and the state, the district and the village levels. He wanted that there should be minimum power at the center and that at the village level there should be maximum power in the conduct of the affairs of the village. The Panchayat administration in charge should also have power over the police. It should also have power to collect taxes. The village Panchayat should get a share of the taxes collected by the state and the center. The progress of a village ought to be planned by the village itself. He called this organization the four-pillared state. According to this arrangement Swaraj begins at the village level and stretches up to Delhi. This provides an opportunity for the common man to participate in the administration. This was the firm view of Lohia.

In the International World

It was Lohia's contention that Satyagraha should be used not only at the national level but also in international politics. He

longed to do away with the distinctions between the high and the low at the international level. As a first step he argued that no nation should have special rights in the United Nations Organization. It was his desire that all the poor countries in the world should stand together. Towards the end of the Second World War America dropped the atom bomb not on Germany but on Japan-an Asian country. He said that this proved the racial prejudices of the Western nations.

Poverty and progress are not the problems of any single country. While half the world is wallowing in wealth, the other half is struggling in poverty, ignorance, disease and inequality. In such a world peace and tranquility are impossible. The developed nations of the world ought to do their duty by the developing nations. If there is famine in any corner of the world, the other nations should race to help the people. Lohia used to say that there should be an international welfare fund and an international organization

A Hero of Rare Courage

Such was his life that Lohia became another name for fearlessness. Both during British rule and in free India he expressed his opinions fearlessly. His yardstick to judge any idea or plan was always the same-does it help the down- trodden and the poor? His scholarship was amazing. His intellect was penetrating. He was a man of independent views.

For five thousand years no one has known whether the common man is alive or dead in this land. His personality should blossom and he must grow into a new man. Lohia toiled and died for the cause of the common man.

4

Raja Ram Mohan Roy : The Father of Modern India

"Beneath this stone rest the remains of Raja Ram Mohan Roy Bahadur, a contientious and steadfast behaviour in the unity of Gohead, he consecrated his life with entire devotion to the worship of the Devine Spirit alone. To great natural talents, he united thorough mastery of many languages and distinguished himself as one of the greatestest scholars of his day. His unwearied labour to promote the social moral and physical condition of the people of India, his earnest endeavours to supress idolatry and the rite of suttie and his constant zealous advocacy of whatever tended to advance the glory of God and the welfare of man live in the grateful remembrance of his countrymen."

Well, that's how the tombstone of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's final resting place "records the sorrow and pride with which his memory is cherished by his descendants..."

But, some 172 orbits of the Earth around the Sun since his passing, one wonders if the above epitaph adequately describes the profound influence Ram Mohan's life had on modern India or for that matter, the world at large. Any Bengali, any Indian, any South Asian, as a matter of fact any free thinking man or woman of today's world must feel genuine pride in kissing this ground where Raja Ram Mohan onced walked.

KING AMONGST MEN

He was not a Raja (king) in the literal sense, the ceremonial Mughal monarch of Delhi bestowed the Raja title upon him. But

we know he was bigger than a King. Handsome, articulate, intellectually unparallel, fearless, socially responsive, politically astute and religiously liberated Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a writer, educationist, journalist, philosopher, politician, social reformer, theologian and humanist-all rolled into this such resourceful character that this world will not witness ever again in the near future. Indeed, his life was the torch that helped to rid India of darkness, superstition and ignorance.

Ram Mohan was born in a Brahmin family of *Radhanagar* village in the *Hoogly* district of *West Bengal* on 22nd May 1772 (there's some uncertainty as to the exact date; the epitaph noted the year of birth as 1774). His father Ramakanta Roy's family belonged to the *Vaisnava* (who worship Lord Vishnu-the Preserver; followers of *Sricaitanya Maha Prabhu)* a liberal sect that flourished in Bengal and South India. His mother Tarini Devi's orthodox priestly family (Bhattacharyas of Chatra) on the other hand belonged to the *Shakta* sect (worshippers of Goddess Kali-the Shakti-the Mother Energy of the universe).

In the 16th Century, the Koli-Avatar (Kalyug incarnate of God), Lord Sricaitanya renunciated the caste and proclaimed supremacy of God and universal brotherhood. Followers of this proletariet religion are known as Vaishnavas. Despite being Vaishnav descendants, the Roy family was very conservative. The Shaktas hardly ever see things the same way as the Vaishnavas do; they appear to be even more conservative.

In a 18th century Bengali non-urban family setting, where active religious conflicts were bound to arise between the shakta (maternal side) and vaisnava (paternal side) rituals, it is not hard to imagine that some degree of uncertainty and unease would exist in younger minds as to why there were such apparent differences within the one and the same religion. Ram Mohan too must have been at a loss to not find a real handle on questions as to why there are so many gods and goddesses, why so many sects, why so much confusion and why such a large variety of rites and practices to reach the same goal-attaining Moksha (nirvana).

Ram Mohan learned Bengali and Sanskrit to start with; Ramakanta Roy then sent young Ram Mohan (merely 12 years old at the time) to Patna to learn Persian and Arabic languages

at a Islamic institution in the hope that it would assist the young man to secure a better occupation in one of Mughal high offices, even though the British victory at *Battle of Plassey* in 1757 was gradually undermining the foundation of the Mughal empire. The youngman quickly learned these languages and became well-versed in Koranic teachings. The logical organisation of Koran and its monotheistic interpretations-in contrast with the overwhelming breadth and diversity of Hindu literature-appealed to the young mind. The veil of mist lifted from before his eyes. His ever-inquisitive free-thinking mind wanted to know more about other religions and philosophies.

He fell out with his parents for leaving home on more than one occasion without their consent. One of these excursions took young Ram Mohan to Tibet where he gained insight into the Buddhist philosophy and religion. His unceasing questions, inquisitions and critical analyses of rational principles from dogmas annoyed his Llama teachers.

His utter disregard for what can be described as the normal *parental expectation* displeased his father no end who finally forced him out of the family home. His unabating criticisms of Hindu rituals, superstitious beliefs on the one hand and open support for monotheistic principles of Koran, Bible and Tripitak, on the other, later (after his father's death) led him to the Court of Law when his mother and sister unsuccessfully tried to disinherit him on grounds of apostasy.

The Man Who Found Unity in God

Ram Mohan moved to Kolkata in 1897 and started a minor lending business to earn a modest living for a while. Shortly before his father's death in 1803 Ram Mohan moved North to Mushidabad with a job with the *East India Company*. In 1805 he published *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* (A Gift to Monotheism)-written in *Persian* with an introduction in *Arabic* in which he preached *unity of God*. This publication antagonised a section of the muslim community.

In 1809 he was appointed a Reveue Officer in the *Company* and was posted in Rangpur. Here he vigorously continued his Vedic and Tantrik studies and held regular evening discussions

with like-minded Hindu, Muslim and Jain friends. During this period he also spent time honing his English language skills with private study and with the help of an English friend (John Digby-Collector of Rangpur). He followed English and European political trends with keen interest and closely absorbed the cause and implications of the French Revolution for India. Later he learnt Greek, Hebrew and Latin to quench his thirst for knowledge of peoples and their religions. He thoroughly mastered the scriptures, doctrines and genesis of the Jewish religion and Christianity.

During the course of his researches into Sanskrit literature Ram Mohan was impressed by the purity of the monotheistic doctrines imbued in the Upanishads, which were in sharp contrast with the decadent idolatrous and superstitous Hindu rituals. In 1815 Roy founded the *Atmiya Sabha* (friendly society) comprising like-minded Indian liberals-like Prince Dwarkanath Tagore, Prasanna Kumar Tagore, Kali Nath and Baikuntha Nath Munshi, Raja Kali Shankar Ghoshal. The Shabha was also frequented by William Carey's missionaries of Serampore who needed his help in translating the New Testament to Bengali. While he was attracted by the monotheistic aspects of Christianity, he seriously questioned the misguided Christian doctrine of Trinity on grounds of idolatry. He criticised that such doctrines are nothing short of direct parrallels of Hindu beliefs and practices. He clashed with other missionary members of the translation team and a vigorous debate followed. Ram Mohan's *The Precepts of Jesus* (1820) was the product of this debate. Roy, with his extensive knowledge and understanding of the Gospels, smashed the claimed supremacy of the holy trinity doctrine with the same arguments and disdains that the missionaries used to criticise Indian idolatrous practices as a load of rubbish.

Ram Mohan's doctrine of unity of Godhead was an object of criticism from all corners of the orthodoxy-hysterical Brahmins, fundamental muslims, European missionaries, theocrats and political masters alike. Some at the higher echelons of the missionary churches in England were incensed by comments made in *The Precepts of Jesus* by a *heathen.* Not being able to defend against Roy's watertight logic, they instead patronised and attacked Roy himself. How come a non-believer, a creature who does not

possess the mental faculties to comprehend the grand purpose and design of the doctrine of Trinity dare to pass such a callous judgement on their superior faith and their prophet! For fear of retribution from the rulers, friends advised Roy to exercise caution in future. But Roy was determined. He satirised his response in the *Padari Sishya Sambad* (in Bengali 1823).

Ram Mohan's point was crystal clear: one doesn't need a prophet (Jesus) to preserve Christianity. One doesn't need to attribute divinity to Jesus to believe in the Christian God. One doesn't need a son to vouch for the existence of the Father. He argued that Trinity = idolatry. A distinct stream of Christian thinkers, who established the Unitarian Church, needed no convincing. They found a resourceful ally in Ram Mohan. In August 1828 Ram Mohan inaugurated his *Brahma Sabha*, which formed into a church in 1830 (Church of Brahma). The followers, among whom Debendranath Tagore, Keshab Chandra Sen, Pratap Chandra Mazumdar, Raj Narayan Bose etc. of this rejuvinated Hindu Church, known as the Brahma Samaj, played a major role in reforming and modernising the Indian society.

The Man Who Fought Superstitions

Ram Mohan's attack on the Hindu religious idolatry, rituals, caste system and the criminal 'Suttie'(-daho) system of burning alive of widows in the funeral pyre of their husbands (a practice which has evolved motivated more by petty property greed of the surviving relatives than by the need for spiritual salvation) has been not only a bold and forthright attempt at the reform of Hindu societies, but a death blow to ignorance, superstitions and dogmas of his ancestors. Ram Mohan was aghast with these practices. He witnessed the burning of his own sister-in-law (brother Jogmohun's wife was killed in the suttie practice by his own family and he had no power to stop it). His active movement against these senseless practices dissatisfied in particular the 'upper classes of the society' (the *kulins*)-those who seemed to have benefited the most at the expense of the deprived mass. Each practice of a society always has two parties-the beneficiary and the victim.

While the suttie practice was abolished in 1829 (as a result of Ram Mohan's earnest pleading with and direct assurance to

William Bentinck that it is not sanctioned by any Hindu scriptures), similar practices against the less priviledged of the society persist. While the incidences (to a lesser extent, their impact too) are somewhat in decline, India still suffers from the indignation of the remnants of caste discrimination, polygamy, child marriage and ban on widow marriage (still a social stigma-even though allowed under the law since a quarter century after Roy's death); despite Ram Mohan's or Iswarchandra Vidyasagar's active educational drives and moral persuasions of the ignorant mass and the priviledged few. Old habits-the white-anting of the Indian life-die hard. Particularly, if one may benefit from their existence.

Pioneer of Indian Education

Ram Mohan was the first Indian who realised that the only way India can rid itself of ignorance and superstions of the dark ages is by educating its mass by modern European method *i.e.*, by teaching language, science and philosophy. He knew India had to retain its rich heritage from the past, but she also required the best of modern European thoughts and practices to step into the future. He established a number of schools to popularise the modern system of education. He supported David Hare in his educational drive for native Indians. Roy was instrumental in establishing the Hindu College, which was to be later known as the Presidency College.

Pioneer of Bengali Prose and Indian Press

Roy retired from the Company service in 1814 and published his first book of prose called *Vedantasar* in 1815. A well deserved break with the tradition was established in Bengali prose style. The influence of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian words was minimised. Ram Mohan, for his time, was a fiercely independent journalist. In 1821 he published his first Bengali Newspaper-Sambad Kaumudi.

In a speech in the Kolkata Press Club, the Prime Minister of India, Manmohan Singh, regarded Ram Mohan as "the father of the Indian press and of Bengal renaissance". PM stated that:

> *"He published newspapers in Bengali and Persian languages and remained at the forefront of the struggle for a free press.*

Raja Ram Mohan Roy brilliantly expounded the importance of the freedom of the press as early as in 1823."

PM quoted from Ram Mohan's own thoughts on freedom of press:

"….. a free press has never yet caused a revolution in any part of the world …….. whereas, where no freedom of the press existed and grievances consequently remained unrepresented, innumerable revolutions have taken place in all parts of the globe."

He went on to recollect the history:

"When restraints were imposed on the press in Calcutta, Raja Ram Mohan Roy submitted a memorandum to the British Government lamenting the decision of the Government. He drew the Government's attention to the useful role of the press in these words:"

'……..ever since the art of printing has become generally known among the Natives of Calcutta numerous Publications have been circulated in the Bengalee Language which by introducing free discussion among the Natives and inducing them to reflect and inquire after knowledge, have already served greatly to improve their minds and ameliorate their condition'.

In the space of 15 years, from 1815 to 1830, Ram Mohan wrote thirty books in Bengali. According to Soumendranath Tagore, "the excellence that the Bengali prose [later] achieved in literary form under Bankim Chandra and Rabindranath owes its beginning to the Bengali prose developed by Ram Mohan".

The major publications during this period includes the following-not all those mentioned here are in Bengali:

- Vedantasara 1815,
- *Translation of an Abridgment of the Vedant 1816*,
- Ishopanishad 1816,
- Kathopanishad 1817,
- *A Conference between an Advocate for, and an Opponent of the Practice of Burning Widows Alive* (Bengali and English) 1818,
- Munduk Upanishad 1819,

- *A Defence of Hindu Theism 1820*,
- *A Second Defence of the Monotheistical System of the Veds* 1820,
- *A Second Conference*, 1820 (the case for women's rights),
- The Precepts of Jesus-Guide to Peace and Happiness 1820,
- *Sambad Kaumudi*-a Bengali newspaper 1821,
- *Mirat-ul-Akbar*-Persian journal 1822,
- *Padari Sisya Sambad* (Bengali satire) 1823,
- Bengali Grammar 1826,
- Brahmapasona 1828,
- Brahmasangeet 1829 and
- The Universal Religion 1829

Ram Mohan composed a large number of Bengali songs (hymns) called Brahma sangeet that are still popular in Brahma Churches.

Travel to England and France

Ram Mohan was awarded the 'Raja' title by Delhi's titular king. In 1829 he travelled to England to meet the East India Company bosses and the British Parliament. He was received by the local Unitarian ministers with great adulation. He met with King William IV. He went to France in 1833 and was received by King Louise-Phillippe. Incidentally, the French Revolution left a lasting impact on Roy's thought. Back from Paris to Bristol, where Roy lived with a family of local Unitarian Church minister friend, Raja Ram Mohan died on September 27th. 1833. He was buried locally there. A decade later his mortal remains were taken to Arno's Vales cemetery and were buried there with a memorial built by Prince Dwarkanath Tagore.

The Prophet of the New Age

Given the economic, social, religious and political context in which Raja Ram Mohan Roy grew up in India, there is no measuring rod with which one can measure and understand the depth of contribution made by this phenomenal character to his society. Radhakrishnan, a well known academic who became

President of India, like so many others, called him the father of modern India.

Rabindranth Tagore in a speech on Ram Mohan Roy Centenary said this in the opening:

> *"Ram Mohan Roy inaugurated the Modern Age in India. He was born at a time when our country having lost its link with the inmost truths of its being, struggled under a crushing load of unreason, in abject slavery to circumstance. In social usage, in politics, in the realm of religion and art, we had entered the zone of uncreative habit, of decadent tradition and ceased to exercise our humanity. In this dark gloom of India's degeneration Ram Mohan rose up, a luminous star in the firmament of India's history, with prophetic purity of vision and unconquerable heroism of soul. He shed radiance all over the land; he rescued us from the penury of self-oblivion. Through the dynamic power of his personality, his uncompromising freedom of the spirit, he vitalized our national being with the urgency of creative endeavour, and launched it into the arduous adventure of realisation. He is the great path-maker of this century who has removed ponderous obstacles that impeded our progress at every step, initiated us into the present Era of world-wide cooperation of humanity."*

According to another Indian hero, Netaji Subhash Bose "Raja Ram Mohan Roy therefore stands out against the dawn of the new awakening in India as the prophet of the new age."

Raja Ram Mohan Roy has come to be called the 'Maker of Modern India'. Without giving up what was good and noble in the past, he laid the foundations for a great future. He put an end to the horrible custom of burning the living wife with the dead husband.

He was a great scholar and an independent thinker. He advocated the study of English, Science, Western Medicine and Technology. He spent his money on a college to promote these studies.

During the 1965 Indo-Pak War, the tiny 'Gnat' manufactured by the 'Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.' chased away the powerful bombers supplied by the United States of America to Pakistan.

Sri C.V. Raman won the Noble Prize for Physics. Indian scientists, technologists and teachers are working in different parts of the world.

We have the 'Hindustan Machine Tools Ltd.', which manufactures machines which make machines.

When we think of such facts, we feel overjoyed. We feel confident that we shall equal Western nations in the 20th century.

But suppose we knew nothing of modern science, medicine and engineering?

How difficult it would be for us to compete with countries like America, Russia, Japan and Germany!

Suppose we had to depend upon foreigners to teach subjects like English, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Engineering-all subjects, except Samskrita (Sanskrit) and Kannada in our colleges! How much more difficult it would have been for us!

About 150 years ago, only Sanskrit and Persian were taught in our schools. There were very few to tell us anything about Western Science. But even they were in English. And our people did not know English.

It was the great Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who realized that India would be a backward country, if her people did not learn English, Mathematics and Science. He spent his own money and started a college to teach English and Science.

That is why he is called the 'Maker of Modern India'.

He had a high regard for India and Hinduism and was proud of them.

Birth and Boyhood

It was the last part of the 18th century. Foreigners had invaded India again and again and India has suffered at their hands for centuries. The rule of the Muslims, which had lasted 800 years, was coming to an end. India was filled with poverty and ignorance. The English who came to India for trade gradually conquered kingdoms. Many Indians did not understand their own great religion and culture. There were many castes and creeds. The glorious tradition of Vedic times was like a mirror covered with

dust. All round, there was the darkness of ignorance. It was at such a time that Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born.

Radhanagar is a village in the District of Murshidabad in Bengal; Ram Mohan was born in this village on the 22nd of May 1772. His father was Ramakanto Roy, an orthodox Brahmin.

Ram Mohan's parents were devoted to God. They had great faith in their religion. They performed strictly the duties set down by their religion. Ram Mohan was very much devoted to Lord Vishnu. Everyday he would not put down the 'Bhagavantha' without completing the reading of Valmiki Ramayana. But when he came to know that his mother also was fasting, he had his food for her sake. In his 14th year he was about to become a monk. But his mother came in his way.

Education

Persian was the language of the government during the Muslim rule. Knowledge of Arabic and Persian was necessary to get employment or to correspond with the government. Ram Mohan had been educated in Sanskrit, Bengali, Arabic and Persian in his own village. Though Ramakanto was very orthodox, he wanted that his son should have higher education. For this purpose, he sent him to Patna in his ninth year. The boy was very intelligent. He studied Arabic and Persian under famous Muslim scholars in Patna. Aristotle and Euclid were two great thinkers who lived in Greece, hundreds of years ago. Ram Mohan read their works in Arabic. By studying their books, Ram Mohan developed the ability to think for himself.

Many people in India who believed in God worshipped pictures and idols of God. Ram Mohan wondered if God hand any form. He was not interested in idol-worship and in festivals at home. He opposed idol-worship. But his father, who was a very firm believer in idol-worship, felt he was doing wrong. He advised him. The son did not change his mind. Owing to differences between Ram Mohan and his parents, he left the house.

Travels

Ram Mohan was sensible, though young. The boy who left his house did not wander aimlessly. He joined a group of monks.

They wandered about the foot of the Himalayas, and went to Tibet. The Tibetans were Buddhists. They used to worship their teacher. Ram Mohan understood the principles of Buddhism. He condemned the worship of the teacher. He condemned the worship of the teacher. Therefore, the teacher and his disciples grew angry. There was even a plot to kill this bold boy. But the women there took pity on him and saved his life. They cleverly managed to send him back to India.

Sanskrit Education

The parents lovingly received their son who had gone away. But even now, the father and son could not agree on many matters. Ramakanto celebrated his son's marriage, hoping that he would change. But the son did not change. Ram Mohan went to Benaras and studied the Vedas, the Upanishads and Hindu philosophy deeply. When his father died in 1803 he returned to Murshidabad.

Ram Mohan and Religion

His differences with his father regarding idol-worship and the manner in which he conducted himself in Tibet show clearly one thing. Ram Mohan was a man who thought for him. In the Vedas and the Upanishads we see great freedom of thought. Ram Mohan admired this spirit of freedom. He proclaimed that simple living and high thinking should be a man's motto in life. And he lived accordingly.

Once a man brought a conch for sale. He wanted a price of Rs 500. He said: "This conch can give anything a man wants. He can get all prosperity by possessing it." Kalinath, a friend of Ram Mohan, wanted to by it. He asked Ram Mohan for his opinion. Ram Mohan laughed and said, "If this conch can give all the wealth of the world, it must be Goddess Lakshmi herself. I can't understand why this poor fellow wishes to sell Goddess Lakshmi!" As soon as the man heard this, he disappeared.

At Rangpur

Ram Mohan joined service in the Revenue Department of the East India Company. He was an assistant to Mr. John Digby, an English officer, from 1809-14 at Rangpur. Digby appreciated his efficiency.

Though he held a high post on a and some salary and had property in his village, he did not seek a life of luxury.

Ram Mohan was six feet tall. He had a well-built body and a handsome and bright face. He was a highly cultured man. He had an exceptional personality.

Ram Mohan began the study of English in his 22nd year. He used to read books. He also used to read English newspapers received by Digby from England. Therefore, he knew much that many Indians knew nothing about. He knew about the French Revolution (1789 to 1795) which had just then ended. He saw that the stock of knowledge was growing rapidly in Europe. He knew what the people and the Scholars of Europe felt about the ideals of Liberty, Equality and Democracy. Digby used to have visitors from several foreign countries. Ram Mohan mixed with them freely and learnt how to converse fluently and how to write good English. He developed an elegant and forceful English style.

Ram Mohan loved knowledge. How much knowledge he amassed! With the help of Jain scholars, he studied books on Jainism. From Muslim scholars, he learnt Sufism. He was already well versed in the Vedas. He used to arrange meetings of learned men in his house and exchange ideas. This widened his knowledge.

Ram Mohan spent his leisure in learning new subjects and doing social service. He translated the Upanishads and other sacred books into English and Bengali and got them printed.

He wished to go abroad and learn more. But his own relatives filed a suit in the court. This came in the way of his visit to other countries.

Digby, who had gained the confidence of Ram Mohan, returned to England in 1814. Ram Mohan returned to England in 1814. Ram Mohan resigned his post and settled in Calcutta. He devoted the rest of his life to public service.

That India should prosper was Ram Mohan's ardent desire. But the people had to be cured of ignorance, they needed education. He dedicated himself to this task.

A mighty task calls for earnest mighty preparation, does it not? Ram Mohan prepared himself in every way to undertake this

big task. He had understood the essence of all religious books. He had first to remove the dirt of superstitions and bad customs, which had dimmed the brightness of Indian culture. Then he had to learn how the educational system had developed in other countries, the ways of life there and what efforts were made to put an end to poverty. What was good in other countries had to be learnt and to be followed here. In this way Ram Mohan began the work of reformation.

But he did not believe that all old customs in India should be given up and that Indians should blindly imitate the foreigners. He did not condemn all the religious customs; but he said that they should use their discretion in following them. Many times people do wrong things without knowing what has been said in the scriptures. They can read these holy books if they are available in the language of the people. When other people say 'This is what the scriptures say, that is what the scriptures say', people can find out for themselves what these books say. The holy books of the Hindus were in Sanskrit. Ram Mohan translated them into Bengali. In his preface, he said, 'We should understand correctly what is said in our religious books and what is relevant to our times.'

Ram Mohan was a firm believer in truth. He would admit his faults. He used to quote the words of Vashishta: Words of wisdom should be accepted even if they come from a child; but even if Lord Brahma utters unwise words, they should be ignored as a blade of straw

'Atmiya Sabha'

The marriage of girls five or six years old.

Burning the wife with her dead husband whether she is willing or not.

Meaningless observance of festivals and worshipping for show.

The worship of several gods and ranking gods as high and low.

Ram Mohan was sick of these practices. He had a high regard for Hinduism. But he felt that the Hindus had yet to understand their religion correctly. There should be equality between men and women. People should give up superstitious beliefs.

Many of Ram Mohan's friends accepted his line of thinking. An association of such close friends was formed. It was called 'Atmiya Sabha' (The Society of Friends). Religious discussion took place there. The members had to give up idol-worship. They had to spread the Society's views on religion among the people.

Many scholars opposed Ram Mohan. Ram Mohan wrote articles in reply. The people read them and understood what was said in the sacred books

Regard for Hinduism

Some Christian priests were overjoyed at Ram Mohan's interest in and enthusiasm for Christian doctrines. They suggested that he should become a Christian. These priests did not understand the mind of Ram Mohan, who was a staunch believer in Hinduism. He had great respect for the Vedas and the Upanishads, which he had studied deeply.

Some men spoke lightly of the Vedas and the Upanishads. Ram Mohan gave them a very clear answer: "There is only one God in the universe. He has no form and qualities, which men can describe. He is full of joy. Every living being has an element of God. These noble ideas sparkle in the Upanishads. Moreover, these books encourage people to think for themselves, they strike out new paths. They do not chain man's intelligence." Just as he condemned the bad customs of the Hindus he condemned the superstitions of the followers of other religions.

Education for the Progress of the County

If we are to be happy we must have good crops. For this purpose, we must learn how to use good manure and machinery. We must build dams and dig canals. We must have good roads, bridges, hospitals and factories to manufacture medicines. Thus, the list of the 'musts' is very long.

To fulfil all our needs, we need education, don't we? We need persons well versed in the Arts and the Sciences. We should learn how knowledge is expanding in foreign countries.

Today, if a county is to prosper, it is not enough if it merely recalls its ancient history and culture. Without forgetting them, the country should develop the knowledge and strength suited

to the world of today. Of course, there were schools in Ram Mohan's age also. But they used to teach Arabic and Persian needed for the work of the government. There are people who use languages like Bengali, Marati, Kannada and Telugu, aren't there? These languages also should grow. There was no scope for this. The methods of teaching were also old-fashioned. Much emphasis was laid upon memorization. If children did not memorize, they were punished cruelly. The subjects taught in the schools were very few. Mathematics, History, Geography, Physics and Botany were not at all taught.

Some people were running English Schools. Even there, the System of education was not satisfactory. English words were taught to children. Those who had memorized them felt proud that they had learnt much.

Ram Mohan came to Calcutta in 1815. He formed an association of English and Hindu scholars. He started a college also and arranged for the teaching of modern subjects like Science, Political Science, Mathematics, and English.

One of the members of the association was rich and educated man called Radhakanto Dev. He had some followers from the beginning. He did not like Ram Mohan. He obstinately said that he would not help the association, if Ram Mohan were a member. To Ram Mohan, the prosperity of the association was more important than his status. So, he did not become a member of the association, though he himself had started it.

During 1816-17, Ram Mohan started an English College with his own money. Today it is difficult even to believe that he spent so much money for the spread of education. He understood the condition of the country; he saw that the students should learn the English language and scientific subjects. But in his college, besides Sanskrit also were taught.

Ram Mohan criticized the government's policy of opening only Sanskrit schools. 'Because of this, Indians would have no contact with Western civilization. They would lag behind without studying modern subjects like Mathematics, Geography and Latin were held in high esteem in Europe. But, are the students in England learning only Latin, Greek and the Bible? If Science and

Mathematics are necessary for us?' He argued that the government should examine this point.

Government accepted this idea of Ram Mohan and implemented it after his death.

Service to Literature

Ram Mohan was the first to give importance to the development of the mother tongue. His 'Gaudiya Vyakaran' in Bengali is the best of his prose works.

His Bengali was terse, simple and elegant. By translating the scriptures of the Hindus into Bengali he gave Bengali a new dignity.

Rabindranath Tagore and Bankimchandra followed in his footsteps.

Ram Mohan wrote lyrics also.

With the Poor

When Ram Mohan was in Calcutta, he used to go for walks all alone at night. He wished to find out for himself the difficulties of the poor.

It was very cold in a slum. Mosquitoes swarmed. People were sweating profusely. There was stinking smell from the dirt all around. Dirty water was flowing near by. The labourers were returning home after the day's work.

A man was following them.

"Brothers!" he said.

The labourers turned back in wonder.

"How many people live here?" he continued. The wonder of the labourers increased. Who was this man? Why had he come there? "How much do you work in the days" How many families are here?" So question followed question.

The labourers said, "Why does he want to know all these things? He may be mad. He may be an idle fool." They said to Ram Mohan, "Have we nothing else to do? Let us go home."

Ram Mohan bore their mockery and contempt. He followed them. He found out much about their way of life.

'Suttee System' Or 'Sahagamana'

Ram Mohan's brother Jagmohan died. His wife Alakamanjari had to observe 'Sahagamana' (that is, she was to be burnt alive with the dead body). All arrangements were made for cremation. All the relatives gathered. Alakamanjari put on a laced-sari and there was 'Kumkum' on her forehead. (A mark of Kumkum' or vermilion on the forehead is considered sacred by a Hindu wife; it is an indication that her husband is alive.) Her hair was dishevelled. Fear was written upon her face. The corpse was brought to the cremation ground. Ram Mohan begged his sister-in-law not to observe 'Suttee'. Relatives objected to Ram Mohan's words. They bound her to the corpse and placed her on the funeral pyre with the corpse. The pyre was set on fire.

Alakamanjari screamed and cried in fear, but she was not set free. Poor woman! She was burnt to ashes along with her husband. All the relatives praised her shouting 'Maha Sati! Maha Sati!' (a great wife) and went back.

This heart-rending sight of his sister-in-law's 'Suttee' made a deep impression on Ram Mohan's mind. Then and there he took a vow to put an end to this dreadful. Custom. Some people believed that the scriptures said that the wife should die along with her husband. Ram Mohan referred to all the sacred books. But, nowhere was it laid down that the wife should perform 'Suttee'. This custom had come into practice in some age. Some people who knew it was wrong did not have the courage to condiment. The brave Ram Mohan took up this difficult task.

But his task was not easy. Lakhs of people had faith in Suttee system. Many people opposed Ram Mohan and abused him. Some even tried to murder him. But Ram Mohan did not flinch. Even the people of the West, who saw all this wondered, when even the government was afraid to interfere in this matter, Ram Mohan risked his life and fought against this evil practice. In the end, he won and the government made 'Suttee' a crime.

Along with fight for the abolition of 'Suttee', Ram Mohan started a revolution for women's education and women's right to property. He showed that woman enjoyed equal freedom with man according to Hinduism.

Love of Independence

Ram Mohan was an exceptional patriot and lover of freedom. 'I do not think I shall be fortunate enough to see freedom reign supreme all over the world', so he used to lament. Like Tilak, Ram Mohan believed that Liberty was every man's birthright.

Ram Mohan was intensely patriotic, but he was generous and broad-minded. In 1823, the Spanish colonies in South America became independent. He invited his friends to a party to celebrate this joyous event. A friend of his asked him, "Why are you so elated if people in South America become independent?" Ram Mohan said, "What! They may be in South America, but are they not our brothers? Their language and religion may be different. Should we not sympathize with them in their troubles?"

Have you Heard of 'The League of Nations'?

The First World War was fought from 1914 to 1918. The object of starting the League of Nations in 1920 was to see that another such war did not break out. Any dispute was to be settled by peaceful methods. (As this did not function effectively, the United Nations Organization was set up in 1945.)

A hundred years before the League of Nations was started, Ram Mohan had said that such an organization was necessary. If there is difference of opinion. If there is difference of opinion between two persons, they do not fight; they go to a court and accept its decision. If there is difference of opinion between two countries, their dispute must be settled without a fight. An organization is necessary to see that all nations cooperate with and help each other

The First Editor

As soon as we get up in the morning, we eagerly wait for the newspaper. No sooner is the paper delivered than every one wants to read it.

Times were when the number of newspapers was very small. And even those few were in English. There was not a single newspaper in any Indian language!

It was Ram Mohan Roy who first published a newspaper in an Indian language.

Newspapers are absolutely necessary to reform the people. It is possible to make thousands of people understand many things in their own language. Ram Mohan made the newspaper the means of bringing home his views to many people.

'Atmiya Sabha' used to publish a weekly called 'Vangal Gazette'. Besides, Ram Mohan was himself bringing out a newspaper in Persian called 'Miratul-Akhbar' (the Mirror of News) and a Bengali weekly called 'Sambad Kaumudi' (the Moon of Intelligence).

In those days, items of news and articles had to be approved by the government before being published. So, there was no freedom of the press.

Ram Mohan protested against this control. He argued that newspapers should be free and that the truth should not be suppressed simply because the government did not like it. Newspapers should have the right to uphold the truth. It needed much courage to speak out like this 150 years ago, when India was under the British rule. The press secured freedom by the constant efforts of Ram Mohan.

In his articles in the papers, Ram Mohan explained his views and replied to his opponents. He made his words very carefully. He made his comments with tolerance and without wounding anybody's feelings. He thus set a good example to later editors of newspapers.

For Justice and Equality

In those days, courts conducted trials by jury. Some persons were invited to attend the proceedings of the court. At the end, these persons gave the judges their opinions regarding the case. These men were called 'the Jury'. Indians were invited only to lower courts. But Englishmen were invited to higher courts.

Ram Mohan wrote to the government against this practice; he argued that it was an insult to Indians. Finally, the government ended this discrimination.

We now hear the slogan, "Land to the tiller," don't we?

In those days, the landlords had much freedom and authority. Some used to exploit the farmers. There was no limit to their

luxury, pomp and arrogance. The farmers had to give almost all the produce to them in the shape of rent. The poor farmers shed tears of blood. Ram Mohan, who had seen all this exploitation, had said, even so long ago, that the land should belong to the tiller.

Brahma Samaj

Ram Mohan and his followers used to attend prayers in the church of a Christian sect. Chanrashekar Dev, a disciple of Ram Mohan, and others wondered why they should not have a prayer Hall of their own. Ram Mohan approved this idea. They hired a building belonging to a man called Ram Kamal Basu and opened a Prayer Hall called 'Brahma Samaj'.

The members used to meet every Saturday. Vedic hymns and hymns from the Upanishads were chanted by scholars. Religious discussions were held. Ram Mohan recited the religious poems composed by him. Christian and Muslim boys sang songs in English and Persian. Many Hindus and foreigners used to attend these meetings. 'There is only one God. None equals Him. He has no end. He is present in all living beings'-this was the faith of the Brahma's. This was the message of Ram Mohan. The Brahma Samaj did not recognize differences of caste, creed, race or nationality. It emphasized the idea of universal brotherhood.

Ram Mohan in England

It is wrong to cross the ocean and go to the other countries! Such a view appears laughable today. But, a hundred and fifty year ago, it was believed that it was wrong and irreligious for a Hindus to cross the seas.

Ram Mohan was one of the first Indians who rejected this idea and went to England. The allowances granted by the British to the Mughal King of Delhi, Akbar the Second was very small. He had to submit a representation to the King of England to increase it. The Mughal King decided to send Ram Mohan to England at his expense. Before he left for England, the King gave him the title of 'Raja'. The second reason for Raja Ram Mohan Roy's visit to England was to plead for the abolition of 'Suttee' before the Parliament.

Many people objected to Ram Mohan's visit to England. Some British officers also opposed his going to England. But his fame had already reached England.

When Ram Mohan landed at Liverpool, the leading citizens were there to welcome him. The famous historian William Rathbone who was laid up with paralysis sent his son. He fulfilled his last desire by inviting him to his house and by talking to him. Several associations honoured him. He visited France also. Everywhere scholars appreciated his learning.

Though the allowances of the King was not finally settled, it was decided that he could be given three lakhs rupees annually. Ram Mohan's efforts for the abolition of 'Sahagamana' were also successful. On the day when the Bill was passed by the Parliament, the joy of Ram Mohan knew no bounds.

Ram Mohan was very rich. He was a great man who spent his money for other people and for his country. In Calcutta, even foreigners borrowed money from him in times of need. Such a rich man was reduced in England to total dependence upon others, even for food. His health broke down. The main reason for his financial difficulties was that the firm in which he had invested his capital became insolvent.

Out of spite, some people filed a suit against Ram Mohan and his son accusing them of misusing money. Ram Mohan had to spend money like water to prove that he was not guilty. Though he got justice, he lost his entire honour and status in England. Even the financial help from his son stopped. Moreover, one or two persons in England cheated him. He became worried. He fell ill and became bedridden.

Some people, who had respect for him looked after him, like relatives. Reputed doctors treated him. But his health did not improve.

Ram Mohan passed away on 27th of September 1833.

A friend of Ram Mohan visited England in 1843. He removed the coffin of Ram Mohan from Stapleton Grove to Arno's Vale, the commentary on the outskirts of Bristol, and buried it there. A memorial in Indian style was raised over his tomb. It is a hundred and forty years since Ram Mohan died. But his memory

is still green in the minds of Indians. He was an intellectual who tried to lead India to modernity. He taught the Hindus to give up meaningless beliefs and customs. He was the lamp that led Hindus to the essence of Hinduism. His memory itself guides us to a noble life.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Most people remember Raja Ram Mohan Roy as the man who fought to abolish Sati (the practice of a wife immolating herself on her husband's funeral pyre) and also founded the Brahmo Samaj. But his contribution was a great deal more than that.

Roy was born in Radhanagar village in Bengal's Hooghly district on May 22, 1772, to conservative Bengali Brahmin parents. Not much has been chronicled about his early life but what is known is that he had an eclectic education that sowed the seeds for his founding a universal religion, the Brahmo Samaj.

Roy did his elementary education in the village school in Bengali, his mother tongue. At the age of 12, Roy went to a seat of Muslim studies in Patna where he mastered Persian and Arabic. His knowledge of Arabic enabled him to read the Koran in the original, as well as the works of Sufi saints. He also devoured Arabic translations of the works of Aristotle and Plato.

When he was 16, Roy clashed with his orthodox father on the issue of idol worship and left home. To acquaint himself with the Buddhist religion, he travelled across northern India and Tibet for the next three years. His questioning mind objected to the deification of the Buddha and this did not go down well with some of the lamas. He then visited Varanasi where he learnt Sanskrit and studied ancient Hindu scriptures.

In 1803, he secured a job with the East India Company and in 1809, he was posted to Rangpur. From the Marwaris of Rangpur, he learnt about Jainism and studied the Jain texts. Roy was drawn to certain aspects of Christianity that led some of the followers of the religion to suggest that he convert; but he politely declined.

Roy's understanding of the different religions of the world helped him to compare them with Vedantic philosophy and glean the best from each religion. Sufi mysticism had a great influence on Roy. He loved to repeat three of their maxims: "Man is the slave

of benefits"; "The enjoyment of the worlds rests on these two points-kindness to friends and civility to enemies"; and "The way of serving God is to do good to man".

To pursue his interests, Roy resigned from the East India Company a few years later and came to Calcutta in 1815. Dissatisfied with the system of education and the rote method of teaching English, he formed an association of English and Hindu scholars.

He also invested his own money in the starting of a school where he introduced subjects like science, mathematics, political science and English. Roy felt that an understanding of these "modern" subjects would give Indians a better standing in the world of the day.

Though initially antagonistic towards British rule in India, Roy later began to feel that the country would benefit in terms of education and by exposure to the good points of Christianity. For this he was called a stooge of the British.

Along with a group of like-minded people, Roy founded the Atmiya Sabha in 1815. The group held weekly meetings at his house; texts from the Vedas were recited and theistic hymns were sung. Roy was drawn to the Unitarian form of Christianity that resulted in him supporting a Unitarian Mission to be set up in Calcutta in 1824.

Roy's efforts to abolish the practice of Sati were largely driven by his concern for the moral dimensions of religion. It was the sight of the burning of his brother's widow on her husband's funeral pyre and his inability to save her that spurred Ram Mohan into action.

He delved into the scriptures in great detail and proved that the practice of Sati could not gain moksha (salvation) for the husband as each man was responsible for his own destiny. He also realized that very often it was greedy relatives interested in the property of the dead husband who were behind promoting the practice.

His relentless efforts in the form of petitions, writings and the organizing of vigilance committees paid off when the William Bentinck administration passed a law in 1829 banning the practice

of Sati. Roy also succeeded in starting a revolution for women's education and women's right to property. By delving into Hindu scriptures, he showed that women enjoyed equal freedom with men. Among Roy's other firsts was the publishing of a newspaper in an Indian language. The Atmiya Sabha brought out a weekly called the 'Bangal Gazette'. He also published a newspaper in Persian called 'Miratul-Akhbar' and a Bengali weekly called 'Sambad Kaumudi'. Roy placed a great deal of importance on the development of his mother tongue. His 'Gaudiya Vyakaran' in Bengali is rated highly among his writings in prose.

The founding of the Brahmo Samaj was among Roy's most important contributions. Beginning in 1828 as a small group, the Samaj played a major role in Renaissance Bengal of the 19th century by attracting luminaries like Keshub Chandra Sen and Rabindranath Tagore and other members of the Tagore family. The objectives of the Samaj were to follow a theistic form of Hinduism combining the best of what Roy inculcated through his exposure to other religions.

Even today, in Brahmo prayer halls all over the country, people meet once a week, most often on Sundays, and worship the one God or Brahma. At these gatherings, discourses are offered, Vedic texts recited and hymns sung. Present-day followers try to inculcate his words: "Testing, questing, never resting, With open mind and open heart."

Roy felt strongly for the downtrodden and his belief in the universal brotherhood of man led him to support many causes and reform movements. A 100 years before the establishment of the League of Nations, Roy expressed the need for a similar institution. He said that just as two individuals resorted to a court of law to settle major disputes, there should be an organization that could help to settle differences between two countries.

Roy made his first and only trip to England in November 1830 where he lived until his life was tragically cut short on September 27, 1833 after a brief illness.

In today's world of turmoil where religious dogma results in hatred, violence and alienation, Roy's universal approach to religion has much to offer.

5

Language Policy of the British Raj

The Regulating Act of 1773 and the Charter of 1833

Use of English: During the period 1828-1835, the abolition of slavery within the British dominions, the Indian charter of racial and religious equality adumbrated in the Charter of 1833 and the new democratic parliament in Great Britain helped the awakening in India.

A significant step towards nation-building came from Britain through the Regulating Act of 1773. It was the Regulating Act of 1773 that brought the territories under the East India Company under a single Governor-General. Before this Act, the three Presidencies of Bombay, Madras and Bengal were independent of one another. By the Regulating Act of 1773, the Governor or the President in the Council of Bengal assumed superintending powers over the other two provinces as well. By the Charter of 1833, the sole legislative power was vested in the Governor-General in the Council of Bengal to the super-session of the power formerly enjoyed by Bombay and Madras, thus establishing not only legislative centralization, the beginning of the Indian legislature, but also the framework of Modern India.

The Regulating Act of 1773 and the Charter of 1833 introduced and firmly established central legislation and central governance in India, which made it possible for the people of India to convert themselves into a single political nation based on the already existing socio-cultural, religious, and linguistic national identity. The Regulating Act of 1773 and subsequent regulating/reviewing acts of the genre, including the Charter of 1833, were mostly acts

of expediency on the part of the British so that the British power could be executed and sustained with ease and efficiency. The wheel turned a full circle in 1940s.

The proposal to give autonomy to provinces and to keep the provinces in a loose federation mooted by the Cripps Mission in 1940s was also an act of expediency on the part of the British in their desperate bid to retain their hold on India.

Language Policy of the British Raj-A Glimpse

By the time Indian National Congress was established in 1885, it was a settled fact that the form of Western education with English playing a pivotal role would stay and flourish in India. It was also an established fact that jobs in the government, both in the Central and Provincial governments, would be available mostly to those who knew English. Thirdly, knowledge of English began to be synonymous with education.

There were at least signs of this tendency in the form of power wielded by the English-educated Indians and the growing higher status accorded to them in the processes of decision-making in public affairs. Also by the time the Indian National Congress was established, the flow of information from the English language into Indian languages, which was only a trickle earlier, became much more continuous and stronger.

Earlier the flow was from the Indian languages into English, giving information on Indian classical works and works of similar nature meant mostly for an understanding of the Indian culture. Both in literary and nonliterary endeavours, English was slowly being accepted as the model. In, many Indian languages, English education led to various additions and innovations in the forms of literature and in the nuances of expression, and, slowly, English was accepted as the major donor language.

By the time the Indian National Congress was established, it was, indeed, an established fact that for generations to come a new class of people, with English playing a crucial role in their lives, would be the dominant force in India. By the time the Indian National Congress was established, it became a settled fact that recruitment to government jobs would be through English.

Recognition that language could be an important factor for the unity and/or division of the country was emerging only slowly in the manifest actions of the British. The 1833 Act of British Parliament, called also the Charter of Equality of Races, made it clear that no native of the said territories, nor any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein, shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the said Company.

The court of the East India Company conceived this section to mean that "there shall be no governing caste in British India; that whatever other tests of qualification may be adopted, distinction of race or religion shall not be of the number; that no subject of the King, whether of Indian or British or mixed descent, shall be excluded, from the posts usually conferred on un-covenanted servants of India, or from the covenant service itself, provided he be otherwise eligible."

Note that, in the scheme of things proposed here, differences based on race, caste and religion, apart from the economic factor; were alone pointedly referred to. Differences based on language or the possibility of language acting as the mark of identity for several factors such as race, caste, and religion was not emphasized.

Perhaps this was based on the assumption that each race/caste/religion had its own language, or, labels such as religion and race subsumed under them distinct languages. Since, in the matter of language for governance, the trend was well-settled in favour of English, it was perhaps assumed that more than the vernacular identity and its use, it was the other factors, such as race religion, which came to regulate the happenings. There was not much of a recognition that language could easily cut across the factor of religion or race. Also it was perhaps difficult for any European power to concede the possibility of one nation having many languages of power and administration. There was, however, some recognition that communication in Indian languages could be more damaging to the British Raj than the same in English. This was revealed in Lord Lytton's muzzling of the Vernacular Press in 1878, long before the control sought to be imposed by the British on the English language Press.

The Act of 1833 had made Indians eligible for all posts for which they were qualified. However, although thus the Act of 1833 theoretically made Indians eligible, they had not been, in practice, given any posts which they would not have occupied before the Act. The system of competitive examination for the Civil Services was introduced in 1853. It way pointed out that, although the competitive examination was a good thing, it had put a great handicap on Indians as they would find it practically impossible to come to England to compete with English boys in an examination in English language and literature (Sitaramayya 1935).

In spite of these handicaps, Indians had crossed the seas and succeeded in the examinations. Hence both Indians and the British did not consider language as an important issue, since it had by that time became a settled fact that English would be the medium of instruction as well as administration. Adoption of English was thought natural and was not considered to be a medium of discrimination. The demand was generally not against using English as the medium of examination, but the demand was only for holding the examination in English in India also simultaneously, so as to remove the handicap of crossing the seas to appear for the examination in England.

Linguistic Geography of India Prior to the Founding of the Indian National Congress

It is necessary also to describe the linguistic geography of India, prior to the founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Between 1833 and 1853, the Punjab and Sindh had been conquered. The policy of Lord Dalhousie resulted in the annexation of the princely states of those rulers who died without issue. It also led to the annexation of Oudh on the ground of mal-administration by the then ruler. These policies had added considerably to the territories of the Company, which more or less remained the same until the partition of India.

An important aspect of the linguistic geography by the time of 1857 War of Independence or prior to the founding of Indian National Congress was that there were Presidencies as well as princely states which were by and large multilingual. Only very

small states had monolingual populations. The acquisition of the territories by the Company was not based on language considerations. Accordingly, the organization of various territories under the Company was also motivated more by considerations other than the linguistic composition of the populations, which occupied various territories in India.

As already pointed out, the Charter of 1833 emphasized equality of the races, and never considered language as a dominant factor influencing the decision of the Raj. While the Raj did not consider language as an important factor in the organization or reorganization of the territories, or in the pursuit of education, trade and commerce, the Raj certainly looked at Indian languages as an important factor from the point of view of administration. Accordingly, with the introduction of the civil services, provisions were made for the civil servants to learn Indian languages through an incentive scheme.

The India Office in London had been considering the question of the specific oriental languages to be studied in England by the candidates selected for the Indian Civil Service. In a letter dated the 12th August, 1881, Her Majesty's Under Secretary of State for India, India Office, London that wrote to the Secretary, Civil Service Commission, London, that, based on the reference made to the Government of India, which was communicated in the Government of India Despatch No.21 of 17th April 1881, it was decided that in future selected candidates should be required before leaving England to qualify in the following languages:

For Madras, Tamil and Telugu

For Bombay, Marathi and Gujarati

For North Western Provinces, Oudh and the Punjab, Hindi, Hindustsani

For Lower Provinces of Bengal, Bengali and Hindustani

For British Burma, Burmese and Hindustani.

This made two vernacular languages compulsory, and left out the study of the classical languages, Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit, optional, but apparently encouraged. The communication stated further:

"The Secretary of State for India in Council has given to this important subject his careful consideration. He is disposed to agree generally in the principles, which have guided the Government of India in their recommendations, and he assents to their opinion which is that of the Civil Service Commissioners and also of the several local Governments in India, that the Vernacular languages are those which should be obligatory on the candidates rather then the classical languages.

"He has at the same time been much impressed by the value of the suggestion mace by the Civil Service Commissioners that 'the candidates should, in future, be relieved from the necessity of passing at the final examination in more languages than one, *viz.*, the chief vernacular of their several Presidencies,' and to meet this view, he thinks, it will be desirable, to some extent, to modify the recommendations of the Government of India, so as to make one language only obligatory on any candidate, that language being a vernacular language.

"Applying this principle to the circumstances of the several presidencies, His Lordship in Council would propose, in the case of Lower Bengal, to prescribe as obligatory on each candidate the Bengali Language, leaving optional with the candidate the second vernacular Hindustani; but giving it express encouragement by prizes and marks.

"In a similar manner he would make Hindi obligatory in the North-West Presidency, Oudh and the Punjab, and leave Hindustani to the option of the candidate, but with encouragement as in lower Bengal.

"In the case of Bombay, somewhat different conditions have to be met. There can be no doubt that the first or compulsory vernacular for Bombay candidates should be Marathi; opinions, however, differ as to the second. The Government of India recommends Gujarati. But His Lordship in Council has been advised that, as a vernacular, Gujarati is certainly not of equal importance with Marathi, and is probably not more important than Canarese or Sindhi, both of which are vernacular in parts of that Presidency. On the other hand, the adoption of Gujarati as the second optional language for Bombay, would exclude Hindustani, which, though, as the Government of India, truly say,

not in any part of Bombay, a vernacular, is yet more or less current nearly everywhere, and is of great importance for communication with Native, and particularly Mahomedan gentlemen, and for transactions with Native Courts, and the many petty chiefships which so largely scattered over the Presidency in question. On the whole, therefore, and as a choice in a case of some difficulty, His Lordship in Council would, in the case of Bombay, accept Hindustani as the second or optional language, to be encouraged by marks and prizes.

"In Madras, the Tamil and Telugu languages are unquestionably the most important vernaculars, and should, therefore, be first considered. Tamil may, by general consent, be taken in the first order and made compulsory on Madras probationers. For the second, and optional, language, it would seem impossible to pass over Telugu as coming next in importance, and in currency to Tamil, and, therefore, in that Presidency, far exceeding Hindustani in usefulness.

"With respect to the classical languages, His Lordship in Council is disposed to direct that they be left options but encouraged by marks and prizes; only one such language, however, being allowed to be taken up by any probationer, and that one, whichever of the three, Persian, Arabic, or Sanskrit the probationer may select.

"The results of these proposals reduced to tabular form would be as follows:

Presidency or Government	**Language Obligatory on candidate**	**Languages optional but if taken up to be encouraged by prizes and marks**
Lower provinces of Bengal	Bengali	Hindustani and one classical language
North Western Provinces, Oudh and Punjab	Hindi	Hindustani and one classical language
Madras	Tamil	Telugu and one classical language
Bombay	Marathi	Hindustani and one classical language
Burma	Burmese	Hindustani and the classical language

"In addition to the above, His Lordship in Council would suggest that at the time of the final examination a special prize

should be offered for proficiency in Hindustani to candidates proceeding to Madras, and for proficiency in Gujarati to candidates proceeding to Bombay.

"Should the civil Service Commissioners, on consideration, see reason to concur in the above proposals, His Lord in Council would further request their opinion as to the manner or encouraging the optional languages, and as to the prizes proper be offered for that purpose."

An Early Decision of the British Administrators-the Language of Convenience Versus the Language of Culture

The British administrators presupposed and retained English as the only official language of the British Raj. However, the British administrators, as attested in the above communication, did not fail to recognize the importance and relevance of Indian vernaculars for administrative purposes. The decision of His Lordship in Council resolved the conflict between language of ancient culture and language of convenience in favour of the latter.

The Lordship in Council actually foretold the subsequent trends found in all the Education Commissions of India when he provided also for the learning of classical languages in addition to the vernacular.

The British took a regional, zonal or provincial view when they arrived at the domineering vernacular to be taught to the civil servants based on the ranking they perceived as regards widespread/non-widespread use of competing vernaculars in a region, zone or province. The widespread use was not defined in terms only of numerical strength of the population using a vernacular as its first language or mother tongue; there is reason to believe that the then existing representation of linguistic groups in services could have also contributed to the perception that a. particular vernacular had a widespread use in a province.

Another notable feature of the decision was the inauguration of the policy of encouragement given to learning additional languages through certificates, awards and other incentives. Yet another interesting point is the tacit recognition that Hindi had acquired or was acquiring a lingua-franca status within most of

the provinces of India. There is also an assumption that Hindi and Hindustani, though related, were different from one another functionally.

In a nutshell, the order of His Lordship in Council had within it the salient features of a realistic and accommodative language policy and recognized the ground realities. The order perhaps reflected not only the thinking of the British but also the thinking of the Indian elites at that time.

Language Policy in the First Congress Early Associations of Indians

Prior to the founding of Indian National Congress in 1885, there were many associations of natives in the Provinces. The British Indian Association in Bengal, the Bombay Association of Bombay, and the Mahajana Sabha of Madras were all predecessors to the Indian National Congress. There had been a growing urge to come together to seek remedy for what the educated classes thought as defects in the political system prevailing then in India.

All these Associations were, however, originally associations of Indians representing only their respective regions. There is no record as to what language they used in their deliberations. One could safely assume that the deliberations might have been in English most of the time, since all the Provinces were multilingual in character. They may have used the Indian languages of the region occasionally at the informal levels, but English appears to be language of choice. Even today, this is the model we follow.

In addition to this, there appeared to be a trend in which the provinces were looked at as separate entities having direct links with the Centre without much interrelationship between them. The Provinces had some autonomous existence of their own and people used to talk more about their provinces than about the entire nation.

How Did The Indian National Congress Begin?

There was a general feeling which recognized the need for some sort of all-India organization. It is not clear as to who and how the original proposal for an All-India Congress was proposed. Sitaramayya writes that the Great Durbar of 1877, the international exhibition in Calcutta in 1844, or a private meeting of 17 men after

the Theosophical convention held at Madras in 1884, or the Indian Union started by Mr. A.O. Hume might have had their influence on the founding of the Indian National Congress. Whatever might be the origin and whoever might have given the original idea, we come to the conclusion, as Sitaramayya (l935) points out, that the idea was in the air that the need of such an organization was being felt, that Mr. Allen Octavian Hume took the initiative, and that it was in March 1885 that the first notice was issued convening the first meeting of the Indian National Union in December 1885 at Poona, that what had been a vague idea floated generally in the air and influencing simultaneously the thought of thoughtful Indians in the North and the South, the East and the West, assumed the definite shape and became a practical programme of action.

Mr. Hume's Idea of an Indian National Congress

Actually Mr. Hume conceived the Indian National Congress as an association meant for leading Indian politicians to meet together once a year to discuss social matters and be on friendly footing with one another. He did not desire that politics should form part of their discussion, for, there were recognized political bodies in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other parts of India. However, as Sitaramayya points out, it was Lord Bufferin, the then Governor-General of India, who told him that there was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England. He suggested that, in the interests of the ruled, the Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respects the Administration was defective and how it could be improved.

The First Circular Announcing The Indian National Congress

In March 1885, it was decided to hold a meeting of delegates from all parts of India at the ensuing Christmas. The first sentence of the circular which announced the meeting was A Conference of the Indian National Union will be held at Poona from the 25th to 31st December 1885. This formed the first paragraph.

The second paragraph also consisted of a single sentence, which was as follows: The Conference will be composed of delegates-leading: politicians, well-acquainted with the English language (italics mine) from all parts of Bengal, Bombay and

Madras Presidencies. The Conference was conceived to form the germ of a native Parliament. It may be noted that in the first circular itself, knowledge of English was prescribed as a qualification for the delegates who might attend the conference.

Why was the Knowledge of English Emphasized?

Perhaps it was assumed that English would be the language unifying the various segments of British Raj speaking different languages, and hence the participation in the first Congress was, indeed, open to delegates who were well-acquainted with the English language. Since the delegates had all known one common language to communicate with one another, and since everyone perhaps thought that English had been settled as the language of administration and education, and since the purpose of Indian National Congress was not, at that moment, to enable or demand the emergence of an independent India, the question of the use of Indian languages did not play a crucial role then.

It may, however, be noted that one of the resolutions, namely, the seventh resolution of the very first Congress, protested against the annexation of Upper Burma and the proposed incorporation of the same with India. One of the reasons for this approach might have been the realization that whereas there was so much similarity between the various parts which constituted British India then, there was clear divergence between the ethos of Upper Burma and India.

The Presidential Address in The First Indian National Congress in Bombay

The first President of the Indian National Congress, Mr. W.C. Bonnerjee, laid down four objectives for the Congress. The first objective was the promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the more earnest workers in our country's cause in the various parts of the Empire. The second objective was the eradication by direct friendly personal intercourse of all possible race, creed, or provincial prejudice amongst all members of our country and the fuller development and consultation of the sentiments of national unity. Note that there was no indication specifically about language pride or language prejudices in the four major objectives listed by the first-ever President of the Indian

national Congress. Perhaps the prejudices relating to languages were assumed to be covered in the categories of provincial prejudices as well as the relationships between races. Since the country itself was then organized into territories which, in their turn, were multilingual, it was strange that no specific reference to language had been made.

While problems that might be created by choice and use, or non-use, of Indian languages were not considered in the First Congress, the organizers appeared to have very carefully worked out a balance in regional representations in the Congress from the beginning, from the very first Congress in 1885. For instance, the first-ever President of the-Indian National Congress was from Bengal, Calcutta then being the capital of India, whose name was proposed by Mr. A.O. Hume, a Britisher representing Anglo-Indian interests, seconded by a South Indian, Mr. S. Subrahmania Aiyar, and supported by Mr. K. Telang of Bombay.

There is no record to indicate that the delegates of the first Indian National Congress ever used an Indian language in the deliberations of the Congress. Ironically, while the delegates were required to have been well acquainted with the English language, the first-ever Congress was held in Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College and Boarding House in Bombay!

An Assessment of the Delibertions of the Indian National Congress in Terms of Language Issues

An assessment of the deliberations of the Indian National Congress in its first-ever sitting in Bombay clearly indicates that, while the Indian national cohesiveness was considered important, the view that language policies could either contribute to the cohesiveness of the country or to the evolution of the Indian nation was not considered. The participants had with them a language, English, which they all knew, and with which they could communicate with one another. Hence it was only later on that the Congress strove to give a distinctly national turn to the thoughts and ambitions of the Indians, and made attempts to enable them to rediscover their common language and literature and their common crafts, and arts and, above all, their common aspirations and ideals. And yet, the need for balanced regional

representations and preservation of regional interests were recognized in the first-ever Congress, when it demanded in its third resolution the creation of Councils in the N.W.P. and Oudh, and in the Punjab. Till then, the Councils were in existence only in the three Presidencies of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

Emphasis on Indian Languages-growth of a Dogma That a Nation Must have its Own Single Common Language

The emphasis on Indian languages and the emphasis on the rediscovery of the common language and literature, to use the words of Sitaramayya (l935:35), came into vogue only later on as the membership of Congress became more and more broad-based. But this growth of a broad base did not lead to an assertion of the languages of the Provinces/Presidencies. It led only to the growth of a dogma that a nation must have its own, and, possibly, a single common language. This assumption appears to have been taken for granted and taken as a basic principle in all later-day Congress discussions. Be that as it may, the emphasis on Indian languages, or, "the rediscovery of the common language" could not be avoided once the Congress accepted regional representations and demands for the creation of Provinces in areas with less influence and facilities for English education, such as the demands made in the third resolution passed in the first Congress of 1885 in favour of the creation of separate Councils for THE North West Province and Oudh.

Religion and Language

That, in the perception of leaders, religion dominated as the most important candidate creating divisions between peoples of India was borne also in Mahatma Gandhi's speech as late as in 1931 in the Second Round Table Conference. While claiming that the Indian National Congress is truly national, it is what it means-National, it represents no particular class, no particular interest and it claims to represent all Indian interests and all classes, Mahatma Gandhi delivered his speech focusing on the religious representative character of Indian National Congress. There was no reference to diversity in linguistic character of the constituent peoples of India; there was also no appreciation of fear of the potential of linguistic diversity as a threat to Indian unity.

In other words, while religion was viewed to be an instrument that could be used to divide Indian people, language was not considered in the same light even in 1931. Hence, the fact that language issue was not considered significant in 1885 should not surprise us.

Language Policy in Early Congresses-preoccupation with Economic and Religious Issues

The earliest resolutions, both in the first-ever Congress of 1885 and in subsequent ones, did not speak of languages; the deliberations and discussions were concerned with social reforms, political (public administration) and service matters, religious cohesiveness and regional representation.

It is also true that, as the Concise History of the Indian National Congress 1885-1947 points out, the Congress, from its inception, was alive to economic problems, which engaged its serious and constant attention, in a manner and to an extent that far exceeded the attention paid to them by the pre-Congress associations.

However, a look into the resolutions adopted up to 1892 reveals that the objectives were limited to liberalization of the administrative pattern on a modest scale (pages 37 and 38 respectively in the Concise History). During this period, language was not considered an impediment for any of the issues before the Congress. In fact, of all the matters that were perceived to be impediments to national identity and progress, it was religion that received highest priority in subsequent Congresses, and it was religion that was singled out and chosen as an effective instrument to divide the Indian Nation by the British as well.

A great lesson here, for all of us.

Entry of Indian Languages in the Deliberations of the Congress

As we have pointed out earlier, acquaintance, rather a competent acquaintance with the English language was specially mentioned as a pre-requisite for the delegates of the Congress sessions, in the first circular. We will see in due course that, even in the resolutions of the Congress in 1912, knowledge of English was made a qualification for membership in the Legislative Council.

While this was so, there are also evidences that show that, from the very beginning, the use of the vernacular could not be avoided in the deliberations of the Congress sessions. The native language efforts came to the fore very explicitly from the third Congress held at Madras in December 1887.

Thirty thousand copies of a Tamil booklet titled "Congress-Question & Answer" were sold before the Congress began and the proceeds of the sale were used towards meeting the expenses for the session at Madras. Rao Sahib Mookannachary, an iron merchant, spoke in Tamil in the third Congress at Madras which had a large number of representatives from the mofussil districts of present Tamil Nadu, unlike the previous Congresses at Bombay and Calcutta which were attended mostly by people from urban centers and capitals of Provinces.

The delegates to the Third Madras Congress (l887) were not nominated or chosen by individual leaders but were elected by various bodies including those representing craftsmen, small businessmen and workers. Thus, a large number of delegates from the Madras Presidency happened to be those who did not know English-a clear violation of the original understanding that membership was generally open to those delegates well-acquainted with the English language.

Within a short period of three years, the Indian National Congress had accepted the use of Indian languages in its deliberations, at least as a concession to the dominant spirit of the occasion. Later we see this trend, nurtured by local compulsions, getting strengthened, even as the Congress' original insistence on knowledge of English was retained for obvious reasons of mutual intelligibility and convenience.

Powerful Rhetoric in Indian Languages!

We find, at the Nagpur Congress of 1891, only six years after the founding of Indian National Congress, Lala Murlidhar speaking in Urdu, an emotional speech, full of satire. Consider the translated version given in Sitaramayya (l935:67). (The passage below is so relevant that the opponents of globalization can easily use this now!) You, you, it seems are content to join with these accursed monsters in fattening on the hearts blood of your brethren (Cries

of No, No.). I say Yes: look around: What are all the chandeliers and lamps, and European-made chairs and tables, and smart clothes and hats, and English coats and bonnets and frocks, and silver-mounted canes, and all the luxurious fittings of your houses, but trophies of India's misery, mementoes of India's starvation. Every rupee you have spent on Europe-made articles is a rupee of which you have robbed your poorer brethren, honest handicraftsmen who can now no longer earn a living. Of course, I know that it was pure philanthropy which flooded India with English-made goods, and surely, if slowly, killed out every indigenous Industry,-pure philanthropy which, to facilitate this, repealed the import duties and flung away three crores a year of a revenue which the rich paid, and to balance this wicked sacrifice raised the Salt Tax, which the poor pay; which is now pressing factory regulations on us to kill, if possible, the one tiny new industrial departure India could boast of. Oh, yes, it is all philanthropy, but the result is that from this cause, amongst others, your brother are starving, Not 30 years ago, wheat sold for 1½ mounds and gram for 2 mounds for the rupee, for our grain was not exported to foreign lands. Now it is six times as dear, and six times as hard for the poor to fill their bellies, because our philanthropists have conjured up the phantasm of free trade to drain our granaries. Free-trade, fair play between nations, how I hate the sham (emphasis mine). What fair play in trade can there be between impoverished India and the bloated capitalist England? As well talk of a fair fight between an infant and a strong man-a rabbit and a boa-constrictor. No doubt it is all in accordance with high economic science, but, my friends, remember this-this, too is starving your brethren! (Sitaramayya 1935:67).

Note that Indian languages came to play a role, which has not been fully explored by the use of English language: Emotive appeal, pungent metaphors closer to the hearts of the audience, the satire and cynicism, daring personal attacks, with the power to arouse the passions of the audience.

There came to be established a functional separation between cool and calculated deliberations on the one hand, and the arousal of passions for an effective building up of a following; the former function of cool and calculated deliberations being assigned to

English and the latter function of arousal of passions to the Indian languages of the locality.

Even today, a functional separation of this sort is maintained in most of the political organizations which have members from regions speaking different languages, English for mutual intelligibility among peoples of different regions, English and local Indian language for instant communication with the local population. In it there was recognition of the fact that English could not be expected to perform all the functions of communication; it was effective in certain spheres, and worthless, or handicapped, in several others, wherein only an Indian language could perform certain functions more effectively.

It appears that Indian languages intruded unobtrusively into the deliberations of the Indian National Congress in its earliest phase, and they were implicitly assigned certain functions such as the above.

Resolutions in The 1886 Indian National Congress-jury Trial and Indian Languages

There was yet another area in which the use of Indian languages was seen to be important by the Congress delegates in the early years of Indian National Congress. The Indian National Congress passed resolutions in 1886 for the extension of trial by Jury and for giving finality to the verdicts of Juries. Earlier the Government of India introduced the system of trial by Jury, but in 1872 made a change in the system which deprived the verdicts of Juries of all finality, and vested in Sessions Judges and High Courts powers of setting aside verdicts of acquittal by the Juries.

W.C. Bonnerjee, the first President of the Indian National Congress, argued in 1895 in favour of the Jury system as follows:

> *"A judge, translating in his mind the vernacular of a rustic witness, was too engrossed with the language to attend properly to the witness. Indian jurymen understanding the language would watch the demeanour of witnesses and would distinguish truthful speech from false."*

This excellent point made by W.C. Bonnerjee was in favour of retaining and extending the Jury system which, earlier

introduced, was just then curtailed by the British India Administration, and ultimately dropped never to be revived even in free India.

Note that the argument was not intended to support the use of Indian languages in judicial processes and administration, but was in favour of the juries who would, through a better knowledge of the vernacular, be able to arrive at an appropriate verdict. While the value of Indian languages in administering justice was recognized, the idea that Indian languages could be the medium of administration of justice in courts was yet to be raised.

This was not surprising since at that point of time the judges themselves were mostly British. The value of Indian languages in arriving at appropriate verdicts was also recorded indirectly by A.O. Hume who in 1879, before the Congress was founded, recommended that rural debt cases should be disposed of by summarily and finally on the spot by selected Indians of known probity and intelligence who should be sent as judges from village to village to settle up, with the aid of village elders, every case of debt of the kind referred to in which any one of its inhabitants was concerned.

These judges would be fettered by no codes and forms of procedure and they would hear both parties stories Coram Populo on the village platform of the debtors own village. It is needless to tell any one who knows the country that while, when you get him into court, no witness seems to be able to tell the truth; on his own village platform surrounded by his neighbours, no villager in personal questions like these seems able to tell untruth. Everybody knows every body else affairs. Let the speaker deviate perceptibly from the facts, and immediately outgo tongues all-round, and hisses and cries of wah, wah, remind him that he is not in court, and that that kind of thing will not go down at home (Sitaramayya).

While the claim of Mr. A.O. Hume would be treated more as a statement coming from a well-meaning admirer of India and its villages and culture than as a correct characterization of an infallible procedure to extract truth, there was no denying of the potential for extended participation of the village folks when the process was conducted through the local language.

Allan Octavian Home

Sir William Wedderburn, in his biography Allen Octavian Home, describes several of the traits of Allen Octavian Hume and his matchless contributions to Indian National Congress, and through the Indian National Congress, to the Indian Nation at large. While Allen Octavian Hume's original circular announcing the first Indian National Union (later called Indian National Congress) in 1885 spoke of the acquaintance with the English language as a qualification required of the intending delegates to the Congress, Hume did, indeed, appreciate the limitation of this condition.

For, after the Madras session of the Indian National Congress, and perhaps before the next session in Allahabad in 1888, Sir William Wedderburn reports, "A.0. Hume set to work with his wonted energy, appealing for funds to all classes of the Indian community, distributing tracts, leaflets and pamphlets, sending out lecturers, and calling meetings both in large towns and in country districts. Throughout the country, over 1000 meetings were thus held, at many of which over 5000 persons were present; arrangements were made for the distribution of half a million of pamphlets, translations into twelve Indian languages being circulated of two remarkable pamphlets, A Congress Catechism and A conversation between Moulvi Fariduddin and one Rabaksh of Kambakthpur, showing by a parable the necessary evils of absentee landlordism, however benevolent the intention may be" (quoted in Ram Gopal [1967:62]). Note that early enough the role and function Indian vernaculars for mass communication and radicalization of Congress programmes was recognized, in spite of its tilt in favour of English in its proceedings.

The Lahore Congress of 1892

The Concise History of the Indian National Congress remarks that the year 1892 may be said to mark the first period of Congress history. The period was one of slow growth (p.39). However, to a major happening in the Congress of 1892 held at Lahore, one should trace the subsequent policy making processes of the Indian National Congress as regards even the two-nation theory. Faced with strident criticism that India was not a single nation and that

the growth of the Indian National Congress would be detrimental to the interests of Muslims, (vide Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's assertion in 1888: "I do not understand what the words "National Congress" mean. Is it supposed that different castes and creeds living in India belong to one nation, can become a nation, and their aims and aspirations be one and the same?

I think it is quite impossible. You regard the doings of the misnamed National Congress beneficial to India, but I am sorry to say that I regard them as not only injurious to our own community but also to India at large. I object to every Congress, in any shape or form whatever, which regards India as one nation (Ram Gopal 1967:82-83), the Indian National Congress of 1889 passed a resolution stating that wherever the Parsees, Christians, Mohammedans or Hindus are in a minority, the total number of Parsees, Christians, Mohammed or Hindus, as the case may be in such electoral jurisdiction bear to the total population.

This preference for proportional representation to religious groups in Councils later on was to play havoc upon the Indian body politic.

When Lord Cross India Bill was in the debating stage in British Parliament, several speakers on the Bill argued in favour of allotment of seats in Councils to different communal and professional interests. This was largely agreed to by the Congress. The Bill became the Indian Councils Act of 1892. As Ram Gopal (1967:86-87) points out, the Congress was avowedly a secular body; and yet it proposed a system of election that would ensure proportional representation to Muslims as also to other religious communities.

This non-secular approach was forced upon the Congress by the prevailing attitude of some leading Muslims, the most considerable of them being Sir Syed.

Hume was one of those who did not like the "minority clause" and asked it to be cut out. "Indians are Indians," he said; "why should there be majority or minority?" … The Congress was caught up in a dilemma had to take notice of the undesirable parties arrayed against it and ensured the continuance of Muslims in the organization by incorporating communal representation in the

reform resolution. This spirit of accommodation in the Indian National Congress noticed in 1891-92 became also the hallmark later on of the language policy of the organization is seen in the policy relating to the use of the Devanagari and Perso-Arabic scripts of the Hindustani language. It became also the hallmark of the organization's policy as regards the delimitation of provinces on linguistic considerations later on. Thus, the outlines for a future policy of language and culture were drawn in the very early phase of the Indian National Congress.

Recognition of a Political Role for Indian Vernaculars

The early period between 1885 (the founding year of the Indian National Congress) and 1905 was a period of petitions for the Indian National Congress. As Sitaramayya remarks, "there is no doubt that the progress of the Congress from its inception in 1885 to 1905 was one even march based on a firm faith in constitutional agitation and in the unfailing regard for justice attributed to the Englishmen" (Sitaramayya 1935:100). This period, as already pointed out, focused its attention on social reforms, service matters, regional representation and religious cohesion, rather than on any serious thought or effort for the discovery, rather, in the words of Sitaramayya, for the rediscovery of, a common language, or, for the adequate status, recognition and use of Indian languages.

We have already pointed out as to how the membership in Indian National Congress was encouraged only among those who were well acquainted with the English language in 1885, how, in subsequent Congresses, part of the membership was subscribed by those not well-acquainted with the English language, and how, in the Madras Congress of 1885, and how, in the Nagpur Congress of 1891, speeches in vernaculars were delivered. We also pointed out that there was a functional separation in the offing with serious deliberations taking place in English, and the espousal of causes done in an Indian rhetoric through Indian vernaculars.

Restrictions on Newspapers and Indian Languages

The agitation against the Act of 1894, the Government of India notification relating to the Press in the Indian States, was an agitation against curtailing the freedom of expression via the

vernaculars. Both the British India Government and the Congress recognized the potential of vernaculars for what it was. The Congress opened unconsciously its doors for the use of vernaculars in its mass communication performances as it happened in 1888 in Madras or in 1891 in Nagpur, and as was done by the translation of tracts into 12 Indian languages and distribution of the same in various regions of India, by Mr. A.O. Hume.

In other words, the potential for and efficacy of Indian languages far mass communication was rather readily agreed to by the Congress even in its early phase, but its application to the fields of education and administration was not yet recognized decidedly in its deliberations during the period of 1885-1905. The concepts of Swadeshi, boycott, self-government, and national education were in the air, but had to take definite shape strangely through a linguistic phenomenon, namely, the Partition of Bengal, that affected the people's linguistic identity and sensitivity.

A Prelude to the Partition of India-the Partition of Bengal

The proposal for the Partition of Bengal was mooted as part of the redistribution of various provinces for administrative reasons since 1867-68, but such proposals did not materialize in full scope until Lord Curzon, the Viceroy, took up the matter and announced the government's intention on 3rd December 1903. The Madras session of the Indian National Congress which met in December 1903 resolved:

> *"This Congress views with deep concern the present policy of the Government of India in breaking up territorial divisions which have been of long standing and are closely united by ethnological, legislative, social and administrative relations, and deprecates the separation from Bengal of Dacca, Mymensingh and Chittagong Divisions and portions of Chhota-Nagpur Division, and so separation of the District of Ganjam and the agency tracts of the Ganjam and Vizagapatnam Districts from the Madras Presidency."*

The 1904 Congress session recorded its emphatic protest against the proposals of the Government of India, for the partition of Bengal in any manner whatsoever. The proposals were viewed with great alarm by the people, as the division of the Bengali

nation into separate units would seriously interfere with its social, intellectual and material progress, involving the loss of various constitutional and other rights and privileges which the province has so long enjoyed and would burden the country with heavy expenditure which the Indian tax payers cannot at all afford (Resolution at the 1904 Congress session). But the plan for the partition of Bengal was made known to all on 19th July 1905 to become effective as from 16th October 1905.

Thus began a turbulent period in Indian politics that awakened the Indian masses and brought in the radicalization of politics and participation of Indian masses in the ultimate struggle for Indian independence.

It was the decision of Lord Curzon to divide a linguistically homogeneous community into two religiously heterogeneous groups that was responsible in shaking off the lethargy that had set in, in the Indian National Congress as an organization. The organization and the masses at large throughout the length and breadth of India were galvanized into action by the partition of Bengal, of which we shall see the details in another article.

It is sufficient here to say that Indian language which had, until now, not been given any crucial role in the conduct of the deliberations of the Congress sessions and in its programmes of action, came to dominate the scene almost as an uninvited guest for the next six years in the history of Indian National Congress.

G.K. Gokhale, the President of the Indian National Congress in 1905 at Benares, declared that the partition of Bengal was not an issue relating only o the people of a single province; it was upper most in the minds of all Indians. He said in his Presidential address:

> *"A cruel wrong has been inflected on our Bengali brethren and the whole country has been stirred to the deepest depths of sorrow and resentment as has never been the case before. The scheme of partition, concocted in the dark and carried out in the face of the fiercest opposition that any government measure has encountered during the last half a century, will always stand as a complete illustration of the worst features of the present system of bureaucratic rule--its utter contempt for public*

opinion, its arrogant pretensions to superior wisdom, its reckless disregard of the most cherished feelings of the people, the mockery of our appeal to its sense of justice, its cool preference of service interest to those of the governed."

The 1905 Benares Congress resolved against the partition of Bengal and asked for its reversion or modification of the arrangements, in such a manner as to conciliate public opinion and allay the excitement and unrest present among all classes of people.

We will discuss the genesis of the partition of Bengal and the response of the Indian nation to it, and how the response led the Indian National Congress into wider agitational politics. And all these were instigated by an attack on the linguistic consciousness of a sub-nationality by the British rulers.

6

Mohan Roy and the Rebellion of 1857

1857-1858 was a period of armed uprising as well as rebellions in mostly northern and central India against British occupation of the subcontinent. The war brought about the end of the British East India Company's regime in India, and led to almost a century of direct rule of the Indian subcontinent by Britain: the British Raj.

INTRODUCTION

The events of this period are known to many Indians as the First War of Independence and the War of Independence of 1857 and to the British, and many western historians, variously as the Indian Mutiny, the Sepoy Mutiny, the Sepoy Rebellion, the Great Mutiny and the Revolt of 1857. The Indian rebellion of 1857 is a modern name for the conflict.

The history of the rebellion is, to this day, an ongoing battle between two competing narratives, the history claimed by the British, who won the war, and the history claimed by the rebellious Indians, who were defeated. The fact that atrocities were perpetrated by both sides during the conflict only adds further to the controversy.

The British East India Company won the power of Diwani in the Bengal after winning the 'Battle' of Plassey in 1757. Their victory in the Battle of Buxar in 1764 won them the Nizamat of Bengal as well. Soon after, the Company began to vigorously expand its area of control in India.

In 1845 the Company managed to extend its control over Sindh province after a gruelling and bloody campaign (of Napier's

'Peccavi' fame). In 1848 the Second Anglo-Sikh War took place and the Company gained control of the Punjab as well. In 1853 the leader of the Marathas, Nana Sahib was denied his titles and his pension was stopped.

In 1854 Berar was annexed into the Company's domains. In 1856 the state of Awadh/Oudh was also annexed by the Company. Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar was told that he would be the last Emperor and the Mughal Empire would cease to exist after him.

Vellore Mutiny, Azimullah Khan, History of South Asia, British Raj, Titumir, The Bollywood film The Rising depicts events around the life of Mangal Pandey

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Causes

This has been a subject of much speculation and divided historical opinion. But quite undoubtedly, the rebellion had diverse political, economic, religious and social causes. It is against this backdrop that the war of 1857 is to be seen.

The sepoys (from sipahi, Hindi for soldier, used for native Indian soldiers) had their own list of grievances against the Company Raj, mainly caused by the ethnic gulf between the British officers and their Indian troops. Other than Indian units of the British East India Company's army, much of the resistance came from the old aristocracy, who were seeing their power steadily eroded under the British.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Frictions

Due to the missionary activity, some Indians came to believe that the British intended to forcibly convert them to Christianity, a view which was perhaps not entirely unfounded, as the British religious fashion of the time was Evangelism, and many British East India Company officers took it upon themselves to try to convert their Sepoys. This was strongly discouraged by the Company, which was aware of the attempts' potential to become a flashpoint, but in spite of official disapproval conversion attempts continued unabated.

The jewels of the royal family of Nagpur were publicly auctioned in Calcutta, a move that was seen as a sign of abject

disrespect by the remnants of the Indian aristocracy. Indians were unhappy with the heavy-handed rule of the Company which had embarked on a project of rather rapid occupation and westernisation. This included the outlawing of many religious customs, both Muslim and Hindu, which were viewed as uncivilized by the British. This caused outrage amongst the Indian population. They abolished child marriage-without realizing that child marriage was simply a betroyal agreement between families: the children continued to live with their respective families until the age of consent and the marriage was not consumated until both spouses formally went to their matrimonial home. The British also abolished Sati and claimed to have ended female infanticide, but this claim is doubtful without accompanying demographic data. The removal of Thuggees is perhaps true, but may have been done with the intent of removing obstacles to British imperialism.

Many of the Company's modernising efforts were viewed with automatic distrust; for example, it was feared that the railway, the first of which began running out of Bombay in the 1850s, was a demon. However, the common misconception that the British undertook these changes in social system themselves is largely inaccurate, as there were many Indian reformers, notable among them Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who were really the driving force behind these reforms. In fact, one lesson learned by the British after 1857 was to not enact reforms, but to instead further strengthen social divides in order to maintain their supremacy; and also to appease the gentry, who had been major instigators in the 1857 revolt. After 1857, Zamindari (regional feudal officials) became more oppressive, the Caste System became more pronounced, and the communal divide between Hindus and Muslims became marked and visible, all due in great part to British efforts to keep Indian society divided. This tactic is infamously known as Divide and rule.

The justice system was inherently unfair to the Indians, as can be expected from any foreign occupation. The official Blue Books-entitled "East India (Torture) 1855-1857"-that were laid before the House of Commons during the sessions of 1856 and 1857, revealed that British officers were allowed an extended series of appeals if convicted or accused of brutality or crimes against Indians. The

Company also practised financial extortion through heavy taxation. Failure to pay these taxes almost invariably resulted in appropriation of property.

The British policy of expansionism was also greatly disliked by the Indians. In eight years James Andrew Broun-Ramsay, 1st Marquess of Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India, had annexed a quarter of a million square miles (650,000 km²) of land to the Company's territory.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Economics

The British East India Company was a massive export company that was the force behind much of the colonization of India. The power of the Company took nearly 150 years to build. As early as 1693, the annual expenditure in political "gifts" to men in power reached nearly 90,000 pounds. In bribing the Government, the Company was allowed to operate in overseas markets despite the fact that the cheap imports of South Asian silk, cotton, and other products hurt domestic business. By 1767, the Company was forced into an agreement to pay 400,000 pounds into the National Exchequer annually.

By 1848, however, the Company's financial difficulties had reached a point where expanding revenue required expanding British territories in South Asia massively. The Company began to set aside adoption rights of native princes and began the process of annexation of more than a dozen independent Rajas between 1848 and 1854. In an article published in The New York Daily Tribune on July 28, 1857, Karl Marx notes that "... in 1854 the Raj of Berar, which comprise 80,000 square miles of land, a population from four to five million, and enormous treasures, was forcibly seized".

In order to consolidate and control these new holdings, a well-established army of 200,000 South Asians officered by 40,000 British soldiers dominated India by 1857. The last vestiges of independent Indian states had disappeared and the Company exported tons of gold, silk, cotton, and a host of other precious materials back to England every year.

The land was reorganised under the comparatively harsh Zamindari system to facilitate the collection of taxes. In certain

areas farmers were forced to switch from subsistence farming to commercial crops such as indigo, jute, coffee and tea. This resulted in hardship to the farmers and increases in food prices.

Local industry, specifically the famous weavers of Bengal and elsewhere, also suffered under British rule. Tariffs were kept low, according to traditional British free-market sentiments, and thus the Indian market was flooded with cheap clothing from Britain. Indigenous industry simply could not compete, and where once India had produced much of England's luxury cloth, the country was now reduced to growing cotton which was shipped to Britain to be manufactured into clothing, which was subsequently shipped back to India to be purchased by Indians.

The Indians felt that the British were levying very heavy taxation on the locals. This included an increase in the taxation on land.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Political Interference

If a landowner did not leave a male heir, the land became the property of the British East India Company via the doctrine of lapse carried out by Lord Dalhousie and his successor, Charles John Canning, 1st Earl Canning. Lord Dalhousie used this doctrine to possess a number of Indian kingdoms, most notably those of Pune, Nagpur and Jhansi, causing the disenfranchised rulers of these kingdoms to join sides with the rebellious Indian troops. This was applied to feudal lands as well as to the states.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Sepoys

Sepoys were native Indian soldiers serving in the army of the British East India Company under British officers trained in the East India Company College, the company's own military school in England. The presidencies of Bombay, Madras and Bengal maintained their own army each with its own commander-in-chief. They fielded more troops than the official army of the British Empire. In 1857 there were 257,000 sepoys.

The Company also recruited Indians of other castes than the Brahmin and Rajputs; the latter is a traditional warrior caste in the Western part of North India, now Rajasthan. In 1856 sepoys were required to serve overseas during a war in Burma. Hindu

tradition states that those who 'travel the black waters' will lose their caste and be outside the Hindu community. Sepoys were thus very displeased with their deployment to Burma.

The sepoys were dissatisfied with various aspects of army life. Their pay was relatively low and after the British troops conquered Awadh and the Punjab, the soldiers no longer received extra pay for service there, because they were no longer considered "foreign missions".

However, they were not subject to the penalty of flogging as were the British soldiers. Sepoy soldiers found themselves constantly pitted against their countrymen in an army which the common soldiers increasingly began to feel was governed by wholly foreign influences. In a colonial setting, this is the prime breeding ground for a conflagration.

Into this conflagration, the Pattern 1853 Lee-Enfield (P/53) rifle was introduced into India. Its cartridge was covered by a greased membrane which was supposed to be cut by the teeth before the cartridges were loaded into the rifles. There was a rumour that the membrane was greased by cow or pig fat. This was offensive to Hindu and Muslim soldiers alike, who considered tasting beef or pork to be against their respective religious tenets. The British claimed that they had replaced the cartridges with new ones not made from cow and pig fat and tried to get sepoys to make their own grease from beeswax and vegetable oils but the rumour persisted.

A new drill was also introduced in which the cartridge was not bitten with the teeth but torn with the hand: the sepoys argued that they might very well forget and bite. The Commander in Chief in India, General George Anson reacted to this crisis by saying, "I'll never give in to their beastly prejudices", and despite the pleas of his junior officers he did not compromise.

Some began to spread the rumour of a prophecy that the Company's rule would end after a hundred years. Their rule in India had begun with the Battle of Plassey in 1757.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Start of the War

Several months of increasing tension and inflammatory incidents preceeded the actual rebellion.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Fire near Calcutta

Fires, possibly the result of arson, broke out near Calcutta on 24 January 1857.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Bengal Native Infantry

On February 26, 1857 the 19th Bengal Native Infantry (BNI) regiment came to know about new cartridges and refused to use them. Their Colonel confronted them angrily with artillery and cavalry on the parade ground, but then accepted their demand to withdraw the artillery, and cancel the next morning's parade.

At Barrackpore (now Barrackpur), near Calcutta, on March 29, 1857, Mangal Pandey of the 34th BNI attacked and injured his British sergeant on the parade ground, and wounded an adjutant with a sword after shooting at him, but instead hitting the adjutant's horse.

It is alleged by the British that Pandey was heavily intoxicated with Bhang at the time of this incident. General John Hearsey came out to meet him on the parade ground, and said later that Mangal Pandey was in some kind of "religious frenzy". He ordered a jemadar to arrest Pandey, but the jemadar refused. Pandey then tried to kill himself by pulling the trigger of his musket with his toe. He only managed to wound himself in the chest, and was court-martialled on April 6. He was hanged along with the jemadar on April 8. The whole regiment was dismissed as a collective punishment, because it was felt that they would harbour vengeful feelings towards their superiors after this incident. The other sepoys thought this a very harsh punishment.

April saw fires at Agra, Allahabad and Ambala.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-3rd Light Cavalry at Meerut

On 9 May, 85 troopers of the 3rd Light Cavalry at Meerut refused to use their cartridges. They were imprisoned, sentenced to ten years of hard labour, and stripped of their uniforms in public. It has been said that the town prostitutes made fun of the manhood of the sepoys during the night and this is what goaded them.

When the 11th and 20th native cavalry of the Bengal Army assembled in Meerut on 10 May, they broke rank and turned on

their commanding officers. They then liberated the 3rd Regiment and attacked the European cantonment where they killed all the Europeans they could find, including women and children, and burned the houses. The rebelling forces were then engaged by the remaining British forces in Meerut. Meerut had the largest percentage of British troops of any station in India: 2,038 European troops with twelve field guns versus 2,357 sepoys lacking artillery. Some commentators believe that the British forces could have stopped the sepoys from marching on Delhi, but the British commanders of the Meerut garrison were extraordinarily slow in reacting to the crisis. They did not even send immediate word to other British cantonments that a rebellion was in process. It seems likely that they believed they would be able to contain the Indians by themselves.

On 11 May the rebels reached Delhi, where they were joined by other Indians from the local bazaar, and attacked and captured the Red Fort (Lal Qila), killing five British, including a British officer and two women. Lal Qila was the residence of the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar II and the sepoys demanded that he reclaim his throne. At first he was reluctant, but eventually he agreed to the demands and became the leader of the rebellion.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Support and Opposition

The rebellion now spread beyond the armed forces, but it did not result in a complete popular uprising as its leaders hoped. The Indian side was not completely unified. While Bahadur Shah Zafar was restored to the imperial throne there was a faction that wanted the Maratha rulers to be enthroned as well, and the Awadhis wanted to retain the powers that their Nawab used to have.

The war was mainly centred in northern and central areas of India. Delhi, Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, Bareilly, Arrah and Jagdishpur were the main centres of conflict. The Bhojpurias of Arrah and Jagdishpur supported the Marathas. The Marathas, Rohillas and the Awadhis supported Bahadur Shah Zafar and were against the British.

There were calls for jihad by some leaders including the millenarian Ahmedullah Shah, taken up by the Muslims,

particularly Muslim artisans, which caused the British to think that the Muslims were the main force behind this event. In Awadh, Sunni Muslims did not want to see a return to Shiite rule, so they often refused to join what they perceived to be a Shia rebellion.

In Thana Bhawan, the Sunnis declared Haji Imdadullah their Ameer. In May 1857 the famous Battle of Shamli took place between the forces of Haji Imdadullah and the British.

Many Indians supported the British, partly due to their dislike at the idea of return of Mughal rule and partly because of the lack of a notion of Indianness. These elements were crucial to the British re-conquest of the independent areas. The Sikhs and Pathans of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province supported the British and helped in the capture of Delhi. The Gurkhas of Nepal continued to support the British as well.

Most of southern India remained passive with only sporadic and haphazard outbreaks of violence. Most of the states did not take part in the war as many parts of the region were ruled by the Nizams or the Mysore royalty and were thus not directly under British rule.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Initial Stages

Bahadur Shah Zafar proclaimed himself the Emperor of the whole of India. The civilians, nobility and other dignitaries took the oath of allegiance to the Emperor. The Emperor issued coins in his name, one of the oldest ways of asserting Imperial status, and his name was added to the Khutbah, the acceptance by Muslims that he is their King.

Initially, the Indian soldiers were able to significantly push back Company forces. The sepoys captured several important towns in Haryana, Bihar, Central Provinces and the United Provinces. The British forces at Meerut and Ambala held out resolutely and withstood the sepoy attacks for several months.

The British proved to be formidable foes, largely due to their superior weapons, training, and strategy. The sepoys who mutinied were especially handicapped by their lack of a centralized command and control system. Rao Tularam of Haryana went to collect arms from Russia which had just been in a war with the British in the Crimea, but he died on the way.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Delhi

The British were slow to strike back at first but eventually two columns left Meerut and Simla. They proceeded slowly towards Delhi and fought, killed, and hanged numerous Indians along the way. At the same time, the British moved regiments from the Crimean War, and diverted European regiments headed for China to India.

After a march lasting two months, the British fought the main army of the rebels near Delhi in Badl-ke-Serai and drove them back to Delhi.

The British established a base on the Delhi ridge to the north of the city and the siege began. The siege of Delhi lasted roughly from the 1st of July to the 31st of August. However the encirclement was hardly complete-the rebels could easily receive resources and reinforcements.

Later the British were joined by the Punjab Movable Column of Sikh soldiers and elements of the Gurkha Brigade. Eagerly-awaited heavy siege guns did not guarantee an easy victory against the numerical superiority of the sepoy. Eventually the British broke through the Kashmiri gate and began a week of street fighting. When the British reached the Red Fort, Bahadur Shah had already fled to Humayun's tomb. The British had retaken the city.

The British proceeded to loot and pillage the city. A large number of the citizens were slaughtered in retaliation for the Europeans killed by rebel Indians. Artillery was set up in the main mosque in the city and the neighbourhoods within the range of artillery were bombarded.

These included the homes of the Muslim nobility from all over India, and contained innumerable cultural, artistic, literary and monetary riches. An example would be the loss of most of the works of Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib, thought of as the greatest south Asian poet of that era.

The British soon arrested Bahadur Shah, and the next day British officer William Hodson shot his sons Mirza Mughal, Mirza Khizr Sultan, and Mirza Abu Bakr under his own authority. Their heads were presented to their father the next day.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Cawnpore

In June, sepoys under General Wheeler in Kanpur, (known as Cawnpore by the British) rebelled-apparently with tacit approval of the Nana Sahib-and besieged the European entrenchment. The British lasted three weeks of the Siege of Cawnpore with little water, suffering constant casualties.

On the 25th of June the Nana Sahib requested surrender and Wheeler had little choice but to accept. The Nana Sahib promised them safe passage to a secure location but when the British boarded riverboats, their pilots fled, setting fire to the boats, and the rebellious sepoys opened fire on the British, soldiers and civilians. One boat with 4 men escaped.

The surviving women and children were led to Bibi-Ghar (the House of the Ladies) in Cawnpore. On the 15th of July, worried by the approach of the British forces and believing that they would not advance if there were no hostages to save, the Nana Sahib ordered their murders.

Three men entered it and killed everyone with knives and hatchets and hacked them to pieces. Their bodies were thrown down a well.

The butchering of the women and children proved to be a mistake. The British public was aghast and the pro-Indian proponents lost all their support. Cawnpore became a war cry for the British soldiers for the rest of the conflict. The Nana Sahib disappeared and was probably killed trying to escape India.

When the British retook Cawnpore later, the soldiers took their sepoy prisoners to the Bibi-Ghar and forced them to lick the bloodstains from the walls and floor. Then they hanged all of the sepoy prisoners.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Lucknow

Rebellion erupted in the state of Awadh (also known as Oudh, in modern-day Uttar Pradesh) very soon after the events in Meerut. The British commander of Lucknow, Henry Lawrence, had enough time to fortify his position inside the Residency compound.

British forces numbered some 1700 men, including loyal sepoys. The rebels initial assaults were unsuccessful, and so they

began a barrage of artillery and musket fire into the compound. Lawrence was one of the first casualties. The rebels tried to breach the walls with explosives and bypass them via underground tunnels that led to underground close combat. After 90 days of siege, numbers of British were reduced to 300 loyal sepoys, 350 British soldiers and 550 non-combatants.

This action quickly became known as the Siege of Lucknow. On the 25th of September a thousand soldiers of the Highlanders under General Sir Henry Havelock joined them, in what was known as 'The First Relief of Lucknow'. In October another Highlander unit under Sir Colin Campbell came to relieve them and on the 18th of November they evacuated the compound women and children first. They fled to now-retaken Cawnpore.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Jhansi

Jhansi was a Maratha-ruled princely state in Bundelkhand. When the Raja of Jhansi died without an male heir in 1853, Jhansi was annexed to the British Raj by the Governor-General of India under the Doctrine of Lapse.

His widow, Rani Lakshmi Bai, protested the annexation on the grounds that she had not been allowed to adopt a successor, as per Indian custom.

When the Rebellion broke out, Jhansi quickly became a centre of the rebellion. A small group of British officials took refuge in Jhansi's fort, and the Rani negotiated their evacuation. When the British left the fort, they were massacred by the rebels. Although the massacre might have occurred without the Rani's consent, the British suspected her of complicity in the slaughter, despite her protestations of innocence.

In September and October 1857, the Rani led the successful defence of Jhansi from the invading armies of the neighbouring rajas of Datia and Orchha. In March 1858, the British Army, led by Colonel Rose advanced on Jhansi, and laid siege to the city. The British captured the city, but the Rani fled in disguise.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Other Areas

On 1 June 1858, Rani Lakshmi Bai and a group of Maratha rebels captured the fortress city of Gwalher (Gwalior) from the

Shinde (Sindhia) rulers, who were British allies. The Rani was killed three weeks later at the start of the British assault, when she was hit by a spray of bullets after fleeing Gwalior. The British captured Gwalior three days later.

The Rohillas centred in Bareilly were also very active in the war and this area was amongst the last to be captured by the rebels.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Retaliation--The Devil's Wind

From the end of 1857, the British had begun to gain ground again. Lucknow was retaken in March 1858. On 8 July 1858, a peace treaty was signed and the war ended.

The last rebels were defeated in Gwalior on 20 June 1858. By 1859, rebel leaders Bakht Khan and Nana Sahib had either been slain or had fled.

The British adopted the old Mughal punishment for mutiny and sentenced rebels were lashed to the mouth of cannons and blown to pieces. It was a crude and brutal war, with both sides resorting to what would now be described as war crimes. In the end, however, in terms of sheer numbers, the casualties were significantly higher on the Indian side.

Due to the bloody start of the rebellion, and the violence perpetrated upon the Europeans by the Indian forces especially after the apparent treachery of Nana Sahib and butchery in Cawnpore, the British believed that they were justified in using similar tactics.

As a result, the end of the war was followed by the execution of a vast majority of combatants from the Indian side as well as large numbers of civilians perceived to be sympathetic to the rebel cause.

The British press and British government did not advocate clemency of any kind, though Governor General Canning tried to be sympathetic to native sensibilities, earning the scornful sobriquet "Clemency Canning". Soldiers took very few prisoners and often executed them later. Whole villages were wiped out for apparent pro-rebel sympathies. The Indians called this retaliation "the Devil's Wind."

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Reorganization

The rebellion also saw the end of the British East India Company's rule in India. In August, by the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, power was transferred to the British Crown. A secretary of state was entrusted with the authority of Indian affairs and the Crown's viceroy in India was to be the chief executive. The British embarked on a programme of reform, trying to integrate Indian higher castes and rulers into the government and abolishing the East India Company.

The viceroy stopped land grabs, decreed religious tolerance and admitted Indians into civil service, albeit mainly as subordinates. The British also increased the number of British soldiers in relation to native ones; henceforth 'Indian' regiments would be made-up of at least one-third British soldiers and only these would be allowed to handle artillery. In 1877 Queen Victoria took the title of Empress of India on the advice of her Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli.

7

Roy and Bengal Renaissance

The Bengal Renaissance refers to a social reform movement during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the region of Bengal in undivided India during the period of British rule. The Bengal renaissance can be said to have started with Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1775-1833) and ended with Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), although there have been many stalwarts thereafter embodying particular aspects of the unique intellectual and creative output. Nineteenth century Bengal was a unique blend of religious and social reformers, scholars, literary giants, journalists, patriotic orators and scientists, all merging to form the image of a renaissance, and marked the transition from the 'medieval' to the 'modern'.

BACKGROUND

During this period, Bengal witnessed an intellectual awakening that is in some way similar to the Renaissance in Europe during the 16th century, although Europeans of that age were not confronted with the challenge and influence of alien colonialism. This movement questioned existing orthodoxies, particularly with respect to women, marriage, the dowry system, the caste system, and religion. One of the earliest social movements that emerged during this time was the Young Bengal movement, that espoused rationalism and atheism as the common denominators of civil conduct among upper caste educated Hindus.

The parallel socio-religious movement, the Brahmo Samaj, developed during this time period and counted many of the leaders of the Bengal Renaissance among its followers. In the

earlier years the Brahmo Samaj, like the rest of society, could not however, conceptualize, in that feudal-colonial era, a free India as it was influenced by the European Enlightenment (and its bearers in India, the British Raj) although it traced its intellectual roots to the Upanishads. Their version of Hinduism, or rather Universal Religion (similar to that of Ramakrishna), although devoid of practices like sati and polygamy that had crept into the social aspects of Hindu life, was ultimately a rigid impersonal monotheistic faith, which actually was quite distinct from the pluralistic and multifaceted nature of the way the Hindu religion was practiced. Future leaders like Keshub Chunder Sen were as much devotees of Christ, as they were of Brahma, Krishna or the Buddha. It has been argued by some scholars that the Brahmo Samaj movement never gained the support of the masses and remained restricted to the elite, although Hindu society has accepted most of the social reform programmes of the Brahmo Samaj. It must also be acknowledged that many of the later Brahmos were also leaders of the freedom movement.

The renaissance period after the Indian Rebellion of 1857 saw a magnificent outburst of Bengali literature. While Ram Mohan Roy and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar were the pioneers, others like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee widened it and built upon it. The first significant nationalist detour to the Bengal Renaissance was given by the brilliant writings of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. Later writers of the period who introduced broad discussion of social problems and more colloquial forms of Bengali into mainstream literature included the great Saratchandra Chatterjee.

Later, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, a great saint of Bengal, is thought to have realized the mystical truth of all religions, and to have reconciled the conflicting Hindu sects ranging from Shakta tantra, Advaita Vedanta and Vaishnavism, as well as other religions like Christianity and Islam. In fact Ramakrishna made famous the Bengali saying: Jato Mat, Tato Path. (All religions are different paths to the same God). The Vedanta movement prospered principally through his disciple and sage, Swami Vivekananda who on his return from the highly successful Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893 and subsequent lecture tour in America, became a revered national idol.

Swami Vivekananda urged Indians to break free from the shackles of colonialism, past and present and reaffirmed service to mankind as the highest truth of the Hindu Vedantic religion. "Service to mankind is service to god" was his motto. He was the first Indian to conceptualize an absolutely free, prosperous and strong India, which while appreciative of its rich cultural past would be vibrant enough to walk confidently into the future. Ramakrishna Mission, the great organization founded by Swami Vivekananda, was totally non-political in nature. It must be stressed that the Ramakrishna Movement founded by Swami Vivekananda carried forward their Master's (Ramakrishna's) message of all religions being true. In essence they were reliving what the Rig Veda--one of the holiest Hindu scriptures--had said ages ago: Ekam Sat, Vipra Bahuda Vadanti (That which is, is. Wise Men speak of it in many ways). The Ramakrishna Movement is also noted for their unstinting service to mankind--they pioneered schools, colleges and hospitals and put in action the memorable clarion call of their founder Swami Vivekananda--Shiboggnyane Jib Seba (Serve Mankind as you would serve God (Shiva).

The Tagore family, including Rabindranath Tagore, were leaders of this period and had a particular interest in educational reform. Their contribution to the Bengal Renaissance was multi-faceted. Indeed, Tagore's 1901 Bengali novella, Nastanirh was written as a critique of men who professed to follow the ideals of the Renaissance, but failed to do so within their own families. In many ways Rabindranath Tagore's writings (especially poems and songs) can be seen as imbued with the spirit of the Upanishads. His works repeatedly allude to Upanishadic ideas regarding soul, liberation, transmigration and--perhaps most essentially--about a spirit that imbues all creation not unlike the Upanishadic Brahman. Tagore's English translation of a set of poems titled the Gitanjali won him the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. He was the first Bengali, the first Indian as well as the first Asian to win the award. That is only one example but the contribution of the family is enormous.

Comparison with European Renaissance

The word "renaissance" in European history meant "rebirth" and was used in the context of the revival of the Graeco-Roman

learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries after the long winter of the dark medieval period. A serious comparison was started by the dramatis personae of the Bengal renaissance like Keshub Chunder Sen, Bipin Chandra Pal and M. N. Roy. For about a century, Bengal's conscious awareness and the changing modern world was more developed and ahead of the rest of India. The role played by Bengal in the modern awakening of India is thus comparable to the position occupied by Italy in the European renaissance. Very much like the Italian renaissance, it was not a mass movement; but instead restricted to the upper classes. Though the Bengal Renaissance was the "culmination of the process of emergence of the cultural characteristics of the Bengali people that had started in the age of Hussein Shah, it remained predominantly Hindu and only partially Muslim." There were some examples of Muslim intellectuals such as Saiyed Amir Ali and Mosharraf Hussain. Some scholars in Bangladesh, now hold Bengal Renaissance in a different light. As Professor Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan of the department of Islamic History and Culture of Chittagong University, observes:

> *During nineteenth century A.D., Bengal produced a galaxy of reform movements among the Hindus as well Muslims… the Islamic reform movements such as Faraizi, Tariquah-i-Muhhamadiyah, and Taaiyni and Ahl-i-Hadith, occupied a conspicuous position amongst them. These Islamic movements were revivalist in character… these Islamic movements were born of the circumstances, which had also given birth to the contemporary Hindu reform movements such as Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj, which thrived in Bengal side by side with them… Raja Ram Mohan Roy's movement is generally regarded as 'Renaissance movement'.*
>
> *It is called by some as 'Hindu Renaissance' and by others as 'Bengali Renaissance' movement. It should nevertheless be observed that compared with the European 'Renaissance model', it was a Renaissance with a difference, especially, deeply inlaid by a revivalist make-up of pristine Hindu or Aryan religious spirit… Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Renaissance aimed at resuscitating the pristine Aryan spirit, 'Unitarianism of God', with the help of modern Western rationalist spirit.*

Literature

According to historian Romesh Chunder Dutt:

> *The conquest of Bengal by the English was not only a political revolution, but ushered in a greater revolution in thoughts and ideas, in religion and society... From the stories of gods and goddesses, kings and queens, princes and princesses, we have learnt to descend to the humble walks of life, to sympathise with the common citizen or even common peasant … Every revolution is attended with vigour, and the present one is no exception to the rule.*
>
> *Nowhere in the annals of Bengali literature are so many and so bright names found crowded together in the limited space of one century as those of Ram Mohan Roy, Akshay Kumar Dutt, Isvar Chandra Vidyasagar, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Hem Chandra Banerjee, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Dina Bandhu Mitra. Within the three quarters of the present century, prose, blank verse, historical fiction and drama have been introduced for the first time in the Bengali literature.*

Ram Mohan Roy, also written as Ram Mohan Roy, or Raja Ram Mohan Roy, (May 22, 1772-September 27, 1833) was the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, one of the first Indian socio-religious reform movements. His remarkable influence was apparent in the fields of politics, public administration and education as well as religion. He is most known for his efforts to abolish the practice of sati, a Hindu funeral custom in which the widow sacrifices herself on her husband's funeral pyre. It was he who first introduced the word "Hinduism" (or "Hindooism") into the English language in 1816.

In 1828, prior to his departure to England, Ram Mohan founded, with Dwarkanath Tagore, the Brahmo Samaj, which came to be an important spiritual and reformist religious movement that has given birth to a number of stalwarts of the Bengali social and intellectual reforms. For these contributions to society, Raja Ram Mohan Roy is regarded as one of the most important figures in the Bengal Renaissance.

The 18th century was, perhaps, the darkest age in Indian history. An old, decadent polity was crumbling, engulfing the

entire society in darkness, and no light of hope was visible anywhere. The Muslim rule was disintegrating, and that of the East India Company had not yet established itself. The result was an unprecedented political chaos and confusion.

The political disrder was not the only catastrophe that had befallen India. Of immeasurably greater consequence was the tragic fact that at this fateful hour, India had lost her links with her own supreme realizations, her universal and eternal thoughts. Indeed, all the vital links of the society lay paralysed. Urban and rural life, religious and educational institutions, law and administration, agriculture and industry, trade and commerce-all these were in a state of complete prostration. Dead, meaningless habits and decadent traditions stifled all creative efforts in the fields of art and culture, religion and politics. The stream of ancient Hindu ideals, based on the original scriptures-the Vedas and the Upanishads-had lost its way in the arid desert of superstition, bigotry and perversions. In place of critical analysis, there flourished unreasoned acceptance; instead of deference to authority after judgement, there ruled blind acceptance; where the torch of adventure had lighted the spirit, there reigned formal dogmatism. The Indian mind had become both lethargic and fearful. India had lost her youth.

At this crossroad of history, what India needed most was the advent of a man who would with one mighty sweep clear away the accumulated debris of othodoxy and unreason, who would rediscover India's imperishable thoughts and who, by doing so, would rekindle the spirit of the whole nation. This historical need was served by the emergence of the man who can truly be called the father of modern India-Ram Mohan Roy.

It was Renan who called Petrarch "the first modern mark", and by "modern man" he meant the freed individual who had achieved full emancipation of his spirit. Swami Vivekananda, another maker of modern India, attributed to Ram Mohan the same quality when he described him as "the first man of new, regenerate India".

The foundation of modern India that Ram Mohan laid was agreat synthesis-a synthesis among the three conflicting cultures, three conflicting civilizations-the Hindu, the Muslim and the

Christian. Ram Mohan was the first to evolve a concord and convergence among the three, thus ushering in modern age which is characterised by the evolution of a composite nationality and a synthetic civilization in India. Indeed, he went further, On the same lines of convergence, and through the experiences of his universal personality, he saw in the clarity of this synthetic vision, the solution of the larger problem of international culture and civilization. Ram Mohan understood as nobody had else had done before him, that human progress lies not in separation among nations but in the fraternity of interdependance of individuals and nations evolved through rational synthesis of cultures and civilizations.

To this synthetic vision of Ram Mohan in the spheres of religion and culture, the Indian Renaissance of the 19th century owes its origin and birth. Indeed, there was not a single aspect of India's life-political, social, economic, religious and cultural-which was not shaken out of stupor, and rendered dynamic by the touch of this mighty personality.

Historically, the Renaissance signifies a many-sided, complex movement, a critical and creative outburst of human spirit to free itself from the worn-out moral and religious ideas of the time. It is a movement in which the intellect finds its freedom, the imagination spreads its wings, the narrow, restricted existence makes a strenuous effort to break down the barriers of the old society, and seeks new sources of intellectual and imaginative enjoyment-both in the ancient and in the contemporary experience of man.

In the opening years of the 19th century, ideas acquired a role in the life of Calcutta which is still there. Before that, the preoccupation was making money, and that too quickly, for fear of Portugese piracy on the Hooghly estuary, or of Dutch and French attacks by sea, or of Maratha and Mughal inroads by land. All the important residents had come from elsewhere: the English acreoss the seas, the Armenians overland, and Indians from villages and towns both near and distant. Though the Setts and Basaks had been in Sutanati and Govindapur long enough to identify themselves with the growing city, Calcutta was important but lacked an identity...

Among the problems that Ram Mohan Roy faced, the priority belonged to social reform rather than man's position in nature. To him and several thinkers after him, religion, social reforms and politics were so intermixed that philosophy received little attention. The most important issue for Ram Mohan was that of identity. Society in Calcutta, as well as throughout the country, was ascriptive. Birth determined one's religion as well as one's ritual status; no individual; or group could change caste or ritual status. And change of religion invited censure.

> *Caste identity was indeed difficult to obliterate. However, before his departure for England, Ram Mohan made sure that the trust deed of the first Brahmo temple-executed on January 23, 1830-defined it as "a place of public meeting of all people without distinction"...*

Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar was the most outspokenly forthright of all in the rejection of Indian schools of thought, highlighted by his 1835 letter to the Board of Education on the subject of teachings at Sanskrit College. He maintained that truth had two heads-one according to the 'Empiricists' (such as Locke and Hume), and the other in consonance with Vedanta, Sankhya and Nyaya. In the same letter, he rejected the proposal to teach his pupils Berkeley's Idealism. Vidyasagar was different from most Indian thinkers. After the 1867 famine, he disputed the contention that God was compassionate; for He could not otherwise let so many men, women and children die because of the failure of the monsoon, no fault of theirs. Normally, Vidyasagar did not bother himself with divinity, and the provocation for this utterance has not been traced.

Rarely did he quote the scriptures and the shashtras, except when he chanced upon one in support of the reforms he advocated.

For 40 years (1840 to 1880), Debendranath Tagore led that section of the elite which immersed themselves with beliefs and ideas. He had reacted sharply to the prevalent Christian proselytisation, and revived the Brahmo movement which had lost its vigour after Ram Mohan's death. He allowed caste distinctions to continue, even though he may not have approved of them personally. Debendranath was a Vedantist who put his trust in the Upanishad which Ram Mohan had recommended to

Brahmos as satisfying modern consciousness. Akshaykumar Datta, a young member of the Brahmo Samaj, impressed Debendranath Tagore with his sharp intellect. In 1850, Datta perdsuaded Debendranath and the Samaj to accept the proposition that the Vedas were not infallible. Yet Debendranath's continued to believe in Divine Inspiration. Ten years later, he conferred the honorific "Brahmabandhab" on another young man-Keshubchandra Sen (1837-1884), who joined the Brahmo Samaj in 1857 after it had ceased to subscribe to the infallibility of the Vedas. Little was expected from his talks with Dayananda Saraswati-the founder of the Arya Samaj-who upheld the infallibility of the Upanishads, the caste hierarchy and cow worship. The schism in the Brahmo Samaj that Keshubchandra Sen led in 1865 disowned caste difference, but the word 'Arya' or 'Aryan' was emotively venerated...

We do not know whether Akshaykumar Datta and Keshubchandra Sen were friends, but we do know that Vidyasagar was friendly towards Datta. It was a tolewrant age, for the ostracism faced by Ram Mohan and the Derozians had ended, and the persecution of the Brahmos had not yet begun. Ramkrishna looked with respect towards Debendranath Tagore, Vidyasagar and Keshubchandra Sen, and paid them vists. From 1870, religious and political personalities pushed philosophy to the rear. August Comte's Positivism had found adherents in men like Dwarkanath Mitter and Jogen Ghosh, who conversed in drawing rooms, while religious leaders like Keshubchandra Sen and Vivekananda or political leaders like Surendranath Banerjee and Aurobindo waxed eloquent before impressive gatherings...

The 1872 Civil Marriages Act made it obligatory for Brahmos-parties to inter-caste marriages and remarrying of widows-to declare themselves as non-Hindu. Meanwhile, the incidence of abhorrent practices associatd with Hinduism were declining. The burning of widows and infanticide were now penal offences. Child marriage was no longer rife amongst the educated. The need for a Hindu to be apologetic about his religion was lessening. After Vivekanada's exposition of Hinduism at the World Congress of Religion at Chicago in 1893, there was a resurgence of confidence amongst Hindus...

The Industrial Revolution touched Calcutta around the 1850s and accelarated the influx of people from other towns and villages. The city had been receiving people since 1710, but at a rate which permitted the absorption in line with the prevailing customs. Accelaration made the immigrant a factor in the city's life. The immigrant shed caste habits and prejudices, but in turn moderated the townspeoples' departures from orthodoxy.

At the same time, modernisation tended to reduce the hold that religion exerted on the citizen. Scientific investigations and political activities had begun. In a sense, scientific explorations had begun in 1784 with the founding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, followed by the laying of the Botanical Garden in 1787, the institution of the Botanical Survey in 1797, the Geological Survey in 1846, and the establishment of the Museum in 1814. These institutions served the European residents only. A few Indians, mostly Sanskrit scholars, were associated with the researches of the Asiatic Society. They helped Europe's discovery of India and Europe's Oriental Renaissance. The feedback from these developments started reaching Calcutta fro 1860 onwards, and strengthened religious revivalism and nationalism.

One aspect of this feedback from Europe was the interest by German Idealists (Kant and his succesors) in India's 'speculative' philosophy. That fueled a revived interest in the Upanishads and Vedas. And Vivekananda's enthusiastic listeners abroad led to further acclaim at home.

Interest in 'Positivism' may be ascribed to three unrelated motivations. One, it was more recent than 'Empiricism', and could be attractive on that account to those aspiring for distinction in a colonial city. Two, nascent nationalists would turn to any source other than the English for inspiration. Positivism had originated in France, and it is known that one if its pioneers in Calcutta took pride in having read the original French texts. Lastly, but probably of greatest significance, was the fast that one of its British propagators declared that it was "capable of giving a reason for respecting Hindi social institutions", including the caste system.

Brahmos and Derozians, influenced by 'Empiricism', were critical of Hindu social systems, especially the caste system. Positivism set out to be respectful to the caste system, and this

was its attraction for some Calcuttans. The best known among them are Bhudeb Mukherjee and Bankimchandra Chatterjee. Neither of them joined the Positivist Society, though they had friends in it...

Bhudeb Mukherjee was an essayist and repected for his eruditeness, although not as widely read as Bankimchandra Chatterjee. The 1880s was a decade of resurgent Hinduism as much as the fifties focussed on rationalism and the sixties of advancing Brahmoism. Vidyasagar and Akshaykumar Datta provided the setting for Michael Madhusudan Dutt'a cosmopolitanism in the fifties. In the sixties, Keshubchandra Sen told enthusiastic and appreciative audiences that India's spirituality and Europe's science matched each other as the vital complementary components of the modern world.

The seventies had seen the preliminaris of a Hindu revival in the Hindu Melas, but the requisite intellectual vigour was available only in the eighties, which provided nationalism with the energy it had so far lacked. Bhudeb Mukherjee and Bankimchandra Chatterjee found their efforts supplemented by those of Vivekananda, till their achievements were dwarfed by the younger man's...

Bhudeb Mukherjee was an advocate of Hindi, which the Arya Samaj in 1875 had adopted as the language of propagation. Hindi became the language of the lower courts in the Central Province (now Madhya Pradesh) in 1882 and in Bihar in 1883. Mukherjee, then posted in Bihar, had a role in the administration's acceptance of Hindi. Chatterjee was also posted in Bihar at this time. Hindi became the national language in 1947.

In the novel 'Anandamath', Bankimchandra Chatterjee provided later generations of activist nationalists with a model for change. The song Bande Mataram occupies the position of the second national anthem now, but was the sole one between 1905 and 1947. It was a cry of defiance and a slogan of revolt during the freedom struggle.

Vivekananda turned to religion, provoked by Vidyasagar's observation after the 1867 famine, that God could not be mercifuland compassionate. Whatever the antecedents of the

observation, it launched vidyasagar on the social service that Hinduism had not known before. Hinduism lacked organization for succour to the sick, bereaved, destitute or struck by natural calmity, or to impart education to the young. Little can be done by an individual in a situation created by a famine, but there is considerable scope for charity or social service in everyday life. Charity was quite absent in Hindu life. The unfortunate and the poor were despised as paying for their sins in a previous birth-a corollary to the belief in the transmigration of soul.

Opinions differ whether or not Vivekananda found evidence of a compassionate God, but he did furnish Hinduism with an organization similar to what the Christians had. It was and is named the 'Ramakrishna Mission', named and organized on the model of its Christian counterparts.

It had a predecessor. In 1843 three Derozians-Kisorichand Mitra, Ramgopal Ghosh and Pearychand Mitra-combined with the atheist Akshaykumar Datta to form the Hindu Philanthropic Society. In spite of the support of a rich man like Ramgopal Ghosh, the Society foundered. Traditionally, charity was meant exclusivelu for the Brahmins...

More schools of thought competed for adherents in the city in the second half of the 19th century than the first. From 1850 the conservative leadership devolved on Debendranath Tagore. Technically, he was a Brahno, but of that section which would not break with Hindu caste rules.

However, not all the softening of attitudes was on the Brahmo side. Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-1886), the outstanding Hindu pietist who had come to Calcutta in 1855, humble as he was, called on Debendranath Tagore and Keshubchandra Sen, even on Vidyasagar. The visit to Vidyasagar ended with civilities and nothing else, though Vidyasagar, when told by Ramakrishna that he had come to the "sea" (sagar), replied: "Since you have come to the sea, take some salt water back with you." Ramakrishna did not stop at visits. He took up an idea underlying all Brahmo thinking from Ram Mohan to Keshubchandra Sen, that of the underlying unity of all religions which could lead to the combining of the good points of all. Ramakrishna experimented with living in succession as a follower of each of the major religions. He

concluded that he was most comfortable being a Hindu, as he was home with its mores; the inference was not that Hinduism was superior to all other religions, but that there was no need to switch over from one faith to another; to emphasize to all those restive with Hinduism to stay in the religion they were born in. His disciple, Vivekananda (1836-1902), continued Ramakrishna's efforts, and after Chicago in 1893, was able to secure for Hinduism a recognition which staved off attacks by Christian Evangelists and dissatisfied Hindus...

Michael Madhusudan Datta (1824-1891) became a Christian in 1843 to escape the confines of the Hindu society, ate beef and drank wine publicly and demonstrably, and turned Meghnad, brother of the arch-fiend Ravana in Ramayana, into a hero. He did not take up the role of a reformer, or even a thinker. Instead he devoted his labours to poetry. Vidyasagar, the intellectual leader, saw Madhusudhan Dutt as a pioneer of modern Bengali and encouraged him. Vidyasagar bcame the prinicipal benefactor of Dutt, in spite of being addressed by Dutt with the words "though you are a Hindu..."; Vidyasagar took no offence.

Madhusudan Dutt's main contribution as a poet and playwright was to broaden the outlook and sympathies of the Bengali reader and to induce him to to see that interpretations other than the conventional were possible. Bengali was just achieving recognition as a literary language; the date usually assigned is 1855. Dutt introduced into it an awareness of Greek and Latin classics. He also made a plea for greater use of Muslim topics. Dutt was cosmopolitan in more varied aspects of life than the religious. Bengali cosmopolitanism was to flower about 30 years after Dutt's death, but its seeds were sown by him through his literary work after 1855. The artist and writer-as a propagator of ideas-came to substitute for the religious and social reformer.

Indian religious, social, and educational reformer who challenged traditional Hindu culture and indicated the lines of progress for Indian society under British rule. He is sometimes called the father of modern India.

He was born in British-ruled Bengal to a prosperous family of the Brahman caste. Little is known of his early life and education, but he seems to have developed unorthodox religious ideas at an

early age. As a youth he travelled widely outside Bengal and mastered several languages--Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and later Hebrew, Greek, and English, in addition to his native Bengali and Hindi.

Roy supported himself by moneylending, managing his small estates, and speculating in British East India Company bonds. In 1805 he was employed by John Digby, a lower company official. Through Digby he was introduced to Western culture and literature. For the next 10 years Roy drifted in and out of British East India Company service as Digby's assistant.

Roy continued his religious studies throughout this period. In 1803 he composed a tract denouncing India's religious divisions and superstition. As a remedy for these ills, he advocated a monotheistic Hinduism in which reason guides the adherent to "... the Absolute Originator who is the first principle of all religions." He sought a philosophical basis for his religious beliefs in the Upanishads and Vedas, translating these ancient Sanskrit treatises into Bengali, Hindi, and English and writing summaries and treatises on them. The central theme of these texts, for Roy, was the worship of the Supreme God, beyond human knowledge, who supports the universe. By translating the sacred Sanskrit Upanishads into modern Bengali, Roy violated a long-standing tradition, but, in appreciation of his translations, the French Societe Asiatique in 1824 elected him to an honorary membership.

In 1815 Roy founded the short-lived Atmiya-Sabha (Friendly Society) to propagate his doctrines of monotheistic Hinduism. He became interested in Christianity and learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the Old and New Testaments. In 1820 he published the ethical teachings of Christ, excerpted from the four Gospels, under the title Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness.

The strengthening of British influence in Bengal with the battle of Plassey in 1757 coincided with significant developments of thought in England (John Locke in the 1680s, Adam Smith with his monumental book in 1776, and Edmund Burke) and in the USA (Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and Alexander Hamilton, among others). The English language came to India in 1603 in Akbar's time but there was then no pressing economic reason for Indian people to learn English. It was only after the consolidation

of Bengal by Robert Clive and the extension of the East India Company into the Indian political landscape, that the demand for learning English began to grow.

By 1835, Indians were paying serious money to be taught English, as it gave them job openings in the Company. As Thomas Babington Macaulay noted in his famous Minute: "the natives" had become "desirous to be taught English" and were no longer "desirous to be taught Sanskrit or Arabic". Further, those who wished to, seemed to picked up English very well: "it is unusual to find, even in the literary circles of the Continent, any foreigner who can express himself in English with so much facility and correctness as we find in many Hindus." (see the Minute at).

Those who learnt English quickly became aware of its literature, including the rapid evolution of Western political thought. This greater awareness of the advances in freedom laid the seeds for the demand for self-rule.

While people like Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) were beginning to articulate elements of these political arguments, no one was in a position to explore and articulate new insights. However they did catch up with key liberal ideas and began implementing some of these advances thought through their new demands for greater freedom in India. While the West was firmly embedding its new political institutions, or contesting the growing forces of socialism (which had overpowered parts of the feudal and aristocratic West), the Indian intelligentsia was grappling with the challenge of the first major task ahead of it, namely independence.

As well as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, other contributors to political thought on freedom in 19th century India included Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917), Mahadeo Govind Ranade (1842-1901), Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915) and Pherozeshah Mehta (1845-1915). Theory led to an independence movement in India. Gandhi demonstrated through a humane, non-violent, and dignified protest, that all humans were equal and should be treated equally, including their being given the opportunity to govern themselves. This was a major advance in the theory and practice of freedom and can be argued to have had a major effect in ending the age of imperialism and the age of racial discrimination.

Nehru, who was very well-educated and fully aware of the history of liberalism, seems to have had surprisingly little faith in an individual's ability to think and take responsibility for himself or herself. Nehru did not emphasise the importance of each individual undertaking self reflection and choosing among ethical alternatives. Possibly, in his view, making these ethical choices was too difficult for the common man. He definitely believed that these choices were best directed through state level dictates laid down by governing elites. Through planning. In any event, he veered toward collectivist and socialist thinking where decision making power is concentrated in the state. Decentralisation, where power and freedom vests with people at the lowest levels, was anathema to Nehru. He stated in his Autobiography: "socialism is... for me not merely an economic doctrine which I favour; it is a vital creed which I hold with all my head and heart." Indian industrialists (with their Bombay Plan) also sided with Nehru on a socialist pattern based on the Russian 5-year plan model.

Despite the environment in which socialist thought was flourishing, India was fortunate to enjoy at least a few liberties even before independence. The advances made in political institutions in England as a result of liberalism were imported and embedded into India over the decades by British rulers. Things like the right of assembly and protest under reasonable circumstances, the right to property, and freedom of expression? with a relatively free press, became a part and parcel of Indian political landscape before independence.

Silver-tongued Men

In these dastardly days of Quota Raj standards are dismissed as elitist, mediocrity is proclaimed from all public platforms as the sacred norm, vulgarity is publicly honoured by all political parties as true authenticity, physical intimidation is substituted for intellectual argument at the highest levels of Governance in New Delhi, and our non-descript Prime Minister finds himself impotent to prevent the continuous debasement of public discourse on all vital national issues of life and death. All the instruments of the STATE-I mean our criminally oriented EXECUTIVE, our debased and debauched JUDICIARY and above all our LEGISLATURE democratically filled with some of the greatest criminals in world

history?have been totally paralyzed and sunk to a nadir of progressive helplessness to arrest the leap towards national death. The desolate abstraction of the levelling process will continue to proceed unrelieved by even the smallest elements. In order that everything should be reduced to the same level, it is first of all necessary to procure a phantom, a monstrous abstraction, an all-embracing something which is nothing-a mirage and that platform is the public. This disastrous situation in India today can only be described appropriately in the words of Soren Kierkegaard: the public keeps a dog to amuse it if there is someone superior to the rest, perhaps even a great man, the dog is set on him and the fun begins. The dog goes for him, snapping and tearing his coat-tails, allowing itself every possible ill-mannered familiarity until the public tires, and says it may stop. The public is unrepentant, for it is not they who own the dog-they are only subscribers.

When I was plagued by such dark and dismal thoughts about the present condition of India, I had the good fortune of coming across a recently published book called Raj Orators authored by Dr B G Tandon, formerly Professor and Head of the School of Studies in English, Vikram University, Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh. This book contains the speeches of eminent Indians during the Raj days starting from Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) delivered in 1833 to Shyama Prasad Mookerjee (1905-1953) delivered in 1937. When bandicoots and armed dacoits are placed in the highest positions of authority today with the full benediction of legal authority, we have to turn to these pages of Tandon's book to escape from the emasculating political atmosphere of pseudo-secular mafia of quota raj. Tandon has rendered great national service by remembering and acting upon the immortal words of the great American poet Lowell:

> *They are slaves who dare not be, In the RIGHT, With two or three Tandon in his short preface has stated as follows: English speeches of eminent Indians during the British Raj are a mine of hidden treasures containing history, political thought, biographical material, and above all golden literature. But ironically, they are sucking dust in the obscure recesses of libraries, old bookshops, archives, museums and in the newspaper stack-rooms. It is an exigency of the moment to dig them out*

of this unmerited obscurity and, as Hamlet would say, 'to report them aright to the world'. The present work is an attempt in that direction Tandon has gloriously succeeded in his sacred attempt.

Tandon has considered and presented the speeches of 18 eminent predecessors of Mahatma Gandhi. They were all born nearly a generation before his birth in 1869. Historically speaking, they were born between the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and the uprising of 1857. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the first to be included in this survey, was born fifteen years after the Battle of Plassey in 1872. Kasinath Trimbak Telang (1850-1993), the last to be considered among the predecessors of Mahatma Gandhi, was just 7 years old when the uprising of 1857 broke out. Apart from the speeches of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Kasinath Trimbak Telang, the great orations of Dwarakanath Tagore (1794-1846), Ram Gopal Ghose (1815-1808), Michael Madhusudan Dutt (1824-1873), Rajendra Lal Mitra (1824-1891), Dadbhai Naoroji (1825-1917), Kristo Das Pal (1834-1889), Keshub Chunder Sen (1838-1884), Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901), Womesh Chunder Bonnerjee (1844-1906), Budrudin Tyabji (1844-1906), Rash Behari Ghose (1845-1921), Pheroze Shah Mehta (1845-1915), Ananda Mohan Bose (1846-1906), Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925), Romesh Chandra Dutt (1848-1909) and Lal Mohan Ghose (1849-1909) have been brilliantly presented with critical comments, each speaker being placed in his historic time and context.

These 18 great predecessors of Mahatma Gandhi had learnt two lessons from the times in which they lived. The first was the futility of armed revolution. They had known it from the experience of their countrymen that a violent revolution against the British could not succeed. They were all in fact coerced into non-violent resistance.

Later with Gandhi, this technique was perfected based on higher and sounder moral principles. The second lesson was the realisation that the fallen India needed Western rationalistic outlook for her national rejuvenation.

In Tandon's opinion, the appellation of The Best, as far as the style of oratory in concern must go to Michael Madusudan Dutt (1824-1873), whose speeches were pure and powerful literature.

He handled English Language as no Indian has ever done from the arrival of the Englishmen on the Indian soil till date, says Tandon.

He calls Surendranath Banerjee a splendid orator. Surendranath Banerjee's eloquence recalled the sonorous thunders of William Pitt, the dialectical skill of Fox, the rich freshness of illustration of Edmund Burke and the keen wit of Sherina. Dr. Sachidananda Sinha (1871-1950) paying his tribute to the eloquence of Surendranath Banerjee, whom he knew very intimately, said: Dignity, elevation, lucid exposition of complicated facts, sustained and fiery declamations, impassioned apostrophes, the power to touch the emotions making the hearers laugh and weep as occasion may demand rallying battle-cries, and the thunderbolt of invective, and not merely meek-spirited, dull, prosy sermons. Such was the soaring eloquence of Surendranath Banerjee.

Ram Gopal Ghose (1815-1868) was a man of versatile interests. His speeches covered social, economic, educational and political reforms. His most continuing obsession was female education. He spoke against the racial discrimination of the British Rulers in India and incurred the displeasure of Government. The speeches of Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917) were always focussed on the problem of British-Indian relationships. He believed in the British sense of justice, in the civilizing power of the English system of education, in the British contribution to the establishment of law and order in India and many other benefits that flowed from British rule.

Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901) was a powerful orator and for many years was Secretary of the Indian Social Conference. He spoke on a wide variety of subjects social reform, religious reform, educational reform, political reform, history and culture. Womesh Chunder Bonnerjee (1844-1906) was the first President of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Tandon says that he could not hypnotise the audience by the witchery of his words or by the flow of his eloquence, but he could cast a spell on the intellect by the substance of his thought and the logic of his argument. Clarity, conviction and confidence were the virtues of Womesh Chunder Bonnerjee's oratory. He spoke like a successful advocate rather than an over-powering genius.

Apart from Mahatma Gandhi, the speeches of all the other well-known freedom fighters like Bal Gangadar Tilak (1856-1920), Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932), Motilal Nehru (1861-1931), Madam Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946), Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928), Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915), Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Shastri (1869-1946), Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das (1870-1925), Sri Aurobindo Ghose (1872-1950), Bhula Bhai Desai (1877-1946), Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949), Chakravarthi Rajagopalachariar (1879-1972), Subash Chandra Bose (1897-1945), Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956), Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975) and Shyama Prasad Mukherjee (1905-1953) have been presented in an ordered manner making it very easy for easy consultation and reference.

Here are a few flashes from the speeches of these great and forgotten sons of India: The millions of Indians are dumb. But the press gives them a tongue Kristo Das Pal (1838-1884).

Again and again has India asked: 'which way lies salvation? In the dim past, it was the obstinate questioning of the individual soul. In the living present it is the tortured cry of the Soul of India Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das (1870-1925).

'I advise you to be faithful to your party, but always put the nation above it' Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastry (1869-1946).

'I have no doubt that after all the political scoundrels temporarily catapulted to positions of high authority in New Delhi and the States are dead and forgotten,' Tandon's book will continue to be read by coming generations with great interest. What the Government of India and the State Governments have failed to do in the last 59 years after independence, a private publisher in New Delhi called 'Ane Books India' has done it for the lasting benefit of the mute and helpless millions of India who are kept in a state of continued ignorance by our unscrupulous politicians.

To conclude in the beautiful words of Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901): With buoyant hope, with liberated manhood and with a faith that never shirks duty, with a justice that deals fairly to all, with unclouded intellect and with all her powers fully

cultivated, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world and be the master of the situation and of her own destiny. This is the cherished home. This is the Promised Land. Happy are they who see it in distant vision, happier those who are permitted to work and to clear the way on to it and happiest those who live to see it with their own eyes and tread upon the holy soil once more.

BENGALI PROSE

It was through the immense influence of a towering personality like Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833) that Bengali culture, society, education and literature took a giant step forward. It is an undeniable fact that Ram Mohan Roy had wielded his pen in Bengali Prose with the prime motto of social reformation and purification. He had never intended to create immortal or classical forms of literary extravaganza. But he used the Bengali language, for the first time, as an effective medium of transliteration, discussion and debates. Among his notable transliterations from the ancient Sanskrit texts are-'Bedanta Grantha' (1815), 'Bedanta Sara' (1815), 'The Upanishads' etc. His other commendable works were 'Gauriya-Vyakarana', 'Samvad Kaumudi' etc.

The sketchy report attracted little notice. But more than a month later, a well-researched, detailed and strikingly-presented follow-up shook Parliament.

On November 22, the front page of the paper displayed the picture of a blinded man under the heading "Eyes punctured twice to ensure total blindness." The article by Arun Sinha, the Patna Correspondent, drew attention to the atrocity. Bihar Chief Minister Jagannath Mishra reluctantly ordered an inquiry. Two days later, the matter was raised in Parliament. The weeklies took up the story, and published more close-ups of the blinded prisoners, with gory details of eyeballs being pierced with cycle spokes and acid poured into them. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said she was sickened and phoned the Chief Minister, who, on November 30 suspended 15 policemen. The expose continued with Indian Express Executive Editor Arun Shourie writing two front-page articles criticising the administrative, police and jail procedures which allowed such atrocities to take place.

The Bhagalpur blindings provide an object lesson in the crucial contribution that sustained journalistic research can make in creating public awareness of human rights, more so in a traditional society in which entrenched abuses are apt to be overlooked. The reporter must be able to place the abuse in its wider legal, social and constitutional context to enable the reader to realise its implications. Stories on human rights must touch the conscience of the reader if they are to arouse rethinking of traditional norms. This requires skill in presentation as well. But the impact can be more lasting and more valuable to society than other newspaper events.

In Bhagalpur, many residents protested against the suspension of the policemen, arguing that such punishment deterred crime more effectively than protracted legal cases. It took a sustained campaign on the rights of prisoners, together with the impact of pictures of the blinded men, to touch the public conscience and expose similar brutal practices elsewhere.

In recent years, media has reflected and further strengthened increasing awareness of human rights in many areas in which they were overlooked before. Exploitation and ill-treatment of domestic workers, often children, is still routine in many households. But a series of press reports describing the cruel conditions in which they are often kept has pierced the silence and forced the police to intervene. Special cells have been set up to deal with violence against and ill-treatment of women following sustained exposure of dowry deaths and other crimes.

Bonded labour-workers and children chained to fields or workplace for their lifetimes to repay old debts-is treated as an offence only after the press joined social activists in exposing the evil. Now the police are active, at least in Delhi. On September 10, 2000, it was reported that the "South District (Delhi) police have rescued 19 children from Bihar who were being used as bonded labourers." They were between six and 12 years of age. But investigations into the trauma of the children and the circumstances in which they were bonded in Bihar are missing.

Few countries, if any, have inherited such a wide-ranging legacy of social, cultural, economic and other restrictions on human rights as India. At the same time, India has given itself a

Constitution guaranteeing human rights to an extent unequalled for a country of its size and complexity. But human rights abuses persist; in some areas they have increased. The primary reason lies in widespread ignorance of the rights due to every citizen of the country, even fifty years after the Constitution came into force in 1950. India was a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations even earlier, in 1948.

India has nurtured a free press since it became independent, except for the brief experience of censorship under the Emergency regulations of 1975-76. This provides an opportunity to create widespread awareness of human rights, a social obligation yet to be adequately fulfilled, as evident from India's low listing in the annual UN Human Development Reports. As a developing country, the range of human rights issues requiring media intervention is particularly wide, with a marked social content. This was recognised by the United Nations in December 1986, when the Universal Declaration was expanded to include Right to Development. Access to education, health services, food, housing, employment and fair distributions of income were mentioned specifically. Measures to ensure that women have an active role in development were stressed.

Few papers have taken up the challenge; it needs study and skill to rouse reader interest in often distant processes of human development. But reports selected by the Press Institute of India for publication in Grassroots, its monthly journal on development reporting, demonstrate that such stories can stand out and have a far more lasting impact than routine news stories, however big their headlines. Kalpana Sharma of The Hindu received a prize for her sensitive treatment of the gradual change in caste relations enabling lower caste girls in a Karnataka village to defy the traditional custom of "sitting in the laps" of upper caste elders, and bring out what this meant for social reform.

Latha Jishnu's account of the transformation of a remote backward village in Madhya Pradesh by a locally conceived literacy programme has helped promote literacy in the region. Other reports make such issues as panchayati raj, exploitation of tribals, preservation of forests and water conservation meaningful for the

urban reader. One of the biggest contributions of the press in recent years is to make the right to information a national issue. The campaign for right to information began five years ago with villagers of south Rajasthan demanding access to official files containing details of money disbursed for local development works. They knew that much of the money was misappropriated, but could not prove it without access to the files. Though opposed by the local bureaucracy, they were able to establish corruption in some cases. Taken up by the press, especially local newspapers, the campaign spread to many parts of the country. At the time of writing, four states have passed their own right to information legislation and the Central Government has introduced a Bill in Parliament.

That the press has a role in promoting awareness of human rights, then described as social reform, was realised long before Independence. In 1823, the noted Bengali author, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, brought out weeklies in three languages to campaign against caste discrimination and sati and for widow remarriage. Social reformers elsewhere followed his example. Nearly a century later, Mahatma Gandhi, the most outstanding exponent of journalism in the service of human rights, entered the field. He focussed on the evil of untouchability but also campaigned for women's rights, basic education, prisoner's rights (long before Bhagalpur), community health, rural employment and other development objectives later adopted by the United Nations.

In 1933, Gandhi brought out the first issue of Harijan, or God's children, his name for untouchable. It marshalled support, including a contribution from Rabindranath Tagore, for the Temple Entry Bill that sought to give untouchables the right to enter temples, the first step in their liberation. That the Bill was defeated in the Central Assembly and officially described as "a serious invasion of private rights" indicates the temper of the times. Largely due to Gandhi's sustained campaign at public meetings and in print, untouchability was abolished and its practice forbidden in 1950 under Article 17 of the Constitution. But, as recounted vividly by the prizewinning journalist P. Sainath in a series of articles in The Hindu, it continues to be practised in many ways. The challenge to eradicate the most deep-rooted denial of human rights in India

survives. Having referred to several native gentlemen who had suffered religious persecution for their efforts to emancipate their ladies from the social customs of India, she detailed the mode which she adopted to bring about to bring about an improved system of instruction by native female teachers, and the valuable assistance which had been rendered by the English ladies.

At present girls were taken from school at eleven years of age, partly because it was not considered proper for them to remain under male teachers after that age. After reviewing the state of female education in Bombay and Madras presidencies, she spoke at length on Calcutta, referring to the efforts of John Drinkwater Bethune. She said, "I regret to say that I saw in Calcutta extremely little effort for female education among the natives; in fact, I am not aware of any school (at any rate of importance) established by the natives themselves in Calcutta.

Referring to Raja Ram Mohan Roy she said, "He first broke the bonds of superstition; he was persecuted by his family, and exiled from his home; but he succeeded in establishing the worship of the One True God in Calcutta, where he founded and endowed a place of worship for One True God."

She said that she need not enter into an account of that because "the gentleman is present who may be regarded as the head of it, Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen." She added, "In Calcutta, then, among the Brahmos and Theists, I found an advance in many respects beyond what I had seen in other parts of the country."

Dadabhai Naoroji, honorary secretary to the East India Association, spoke at some length in complimentary terms of the good influence which Miss Carpenter had exercised in India.

The chairman thanked Miss Carpenter and introduced Baboo Keshub Chunder Sen to the meeting.)

It gives me great pleasure to bear my humble testimony in England, as I have done more than once in India, to the noble work of which Miss Carpenter had done for the promotion of female education in India. The warm and philanthropic interest she has evinced in that work, the readiness with which she risked her life and health and exposed herself to many inconveniences and hardships, entitles her not only to the lasting gratitude of the

Indian nation but to the sympathy and respect of all in England who appreciate useful work.

When the first important public female school worthy the name was established by the late Mr. Bethune in the metropolis of India, during the administration of Lord Dalhousie, it evoked a feeling of discontent, throughout the country, and excited great opposition and bitterness; but in spite of a large number of conservative and orthodox men saying, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther," the advancing waves of progress went on till at last, not only in the large cities and presidency towns, but even in the small provincial towns and villages, small school after school rose up, and, in the course of a few years, not only were there scores, but hundred of little girls coming day after day in order to receive instruction in vernacular literature, in arithmetic and in writing. In carrying out the work of female education great impediments, some of them of an almost insuperable character, had to be overcome, and many defects had to be rectified.

In a country where little girls became mothers when they would hardly be supposed in civilized countries to have attained the marriageable age, and where they became grandmothers when perhaps they ought to think of marrying; girls could receive education only for three or four years at most in a public school, their education stopping at a time when they ought to begin. This custom of premature marriage was pernicious, not only physically, but intellectually and morally considered; for the work of education was arrested when little girls, having become mothers, began to talk with ridiculous gravity of the duties they owned to their children. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary to supplement this deficient system of education of native girls with zenana instruction.

As soon as that want was felt, many kind-hearted ladies, both in India and in England, took the matter with an amount of earnestness which was very creditable to them. They combined in order to get funds, and sent out trained governesses to visit native ladies in their own houses. Zenana instruction was indispensably necessary for the real welfare of the country. So long as the system of seclusion prevailed, which would prevail

for a considerable length of time. Another want which was deeply felt was the want of female teachers, and just at the time when that want was beginning to be felt, Miss Carpenter arrived in India. Her advent was cordially and enthusiastically hailed by those who were directing their efforts towards the improvement of education of females in India. They knew she would help them, and she did help them. She saw the want with her own eyes. At once she saw that without a large number of well-trained native female teachers it was impossible to make female schools really useful. She, therefore, represented the matter to several distinguished native gentlemen in Calcutta, in Bombay, and in Madras. Many, of course, did not show their appreciation of the usefulness of the scheme. They were backward in the matter; a few, however, stepped forward manfully, and assured her of their warm interest in the scheme, and their readiness to do all in their power to help her.

She was then obliged to lay the matter before the Government. Unfortunately, the Government also had serious misgivings as to the feasibility of the scheme, not that they were unwilling to educate native women, but they felt it might interfere with the prejudices, and shock the feelings of the native population if they went too far in such a delicate matter; and it was not till instructions were sent out by the Secretary of State for India, that the Government began to really in earnest about it. It was then that the Government sanctioned a liberal grant for the purpose of establishing and supporting normal female schools in each of the presidency towns.

In Bengal, hardly anything has yet been done towards the establishment these normal schools. As Miss Carpenter has already very justly said, Bombay is far ahead of Bengal in the matter of female education. I have visited some of the best schools in Bengal and Bombay, and I can say from my own experience that there are a larger number of girls receiving public education in Bombay than in Bengal; but while Bengal has not come up to Bombay as far as regarded extent of education, Bengal is not behind Bombay in the matter of solidarity and depth. Already several books have been published by native ladies of Bengal of a really valuable character; among others a drama, a beautiful story, and some

charming verses on the beauties and sublimities of creation. A periodical is also published in Bengal, to which Bengali ladies send very often sent most charming contributions, mostly verses, which native ladies take great delight in composing. Some of the best theistic hymns are from the pen of Brahmo ladies. This shows that native ladies are not slow to learn.

The Government having come forward with a liberal grant, it is the duty of the natives of India to cooperate with the Government in a friendly and harmonious manner, in order to give effect to the noble scheme which Miss Carpenter had suggested, and which, through the instrumentality of Government has been realized in at least one of the presidency towns. If full effect can be given to this project, if a sufficient number of schools can be can be brought into existence, not only in the presidency towns, but in the chief provincial cities in the North-West, and in the Punjab, India would be supplied with that which it most wants at the present time.

I hope and trust that the English ladies who are present, would well weigh all that has been said by Miss Carpenter, and that they will be stimulated by her example. I fully agree with Mr. Dadabahai Naoroji that we must not too sanguinely look forward to actual and viable and tangible results, but we must look beneath the surface, in order to see whether or not Miss Carpenter's visit to India has produced a lasting impression on the native public mind, and on the minds of all those who were really interested in the work of female education in India.

(Source: The speech and other details were published with the title Female Education in India in The Brahmo Samaj: Keshub Chunder Sen in England by Brahmo Tract Society, 78 Upper Circular Road, Kolkata in 1915.)

The Vedas can be read at many levels, it is said. Those who have heard the chanting of the Vedas by trained priests will be overwhelmed by the sounds that transport one to a different world. You may not know enough Sanskrit to understand a word but the combination of sounds will make your body a tuning fork resonating to some cosmic sounds. You can read some good translations and find in the Vedas an uplifting philosophy and a beautiful metaphysic. If you have been to a traditional wedding

ceremony and heard the Vedic chants you may thrill to the grandeur and sanctity the Vedas bring to such a ceremony. Some claim that the Vedas include India's pre-history. Some say it contains astronomical codes that enable us to measure anything from the distance to the moon to the movement of stars in the zodiac. However, Dr. Roy says the Rig Veda does not contain history. Nor, he says, is it a treatise on astronomy. It is not merely a praise to the Gods. And surely it is not the emanations of a group of soma-drunk men who wrote the first "magic-realism" novel. What it is, says Dr. Roy of the University of Toronto, is a treatise on cosmology, and it challenges some of the hypotheses that modern physicists have come up with till now about the nature and size of the universe. The Rig Veda is a book of science, and the only reason that we have not been able to understand the science in it is because of the layers of ignorance and misinterpretations that have accumulated over the millennia, says Roy in this intriguing book, *Vedic Physics: Scientific Origin of Hinduism* (1999).

Many during the early 80s' were fascinated with books that tried to explain quantum physics to lay audiences as well as make connections to what seemed to be parallels within eastern mysticism. I was teaching at the Valley School in Bangalore those days and my colleagues and I would read books by Capra, Zukav and others that dealt with quantum physics and eastern mysticism, and our discussions would drag on into the night. After all, in a school that was based on J. Krishnamurti's philosophy most teachers were familiar with Krishnamurti's dialogues with scientists, mathematicians, and psychologists. And there were those innumerable tapes of his discussions with the theoretical physicist David Bohm (author of *Wholeness and the Implicate* Order and some twenty other books on theoretical physics, cognitive science, etc.). Since then there have been other works by Capra, including the movie *Mindwalk* (1995) based on his book *The Turning Point*. Zukav wrote a more critically acclaimed book than Capra, titled *The Dancing Wu-Li Masters.* To this day of course Capra's *The Tao of Physics* enjoys the status of a "modern classic of science". I mention these books because in the past decade or so it seems like the readership for such books is fading. The "establishment"

has won, and the experimental physicists and their fellow travellers have been constructing more billion dollar accelerators and cyclotrons, and chortling over the pictures that the Hubble telescope is beaming back to Earth.

Most of us, if not all, in the Krishnamurti schools were more knowledgeable about the books being written by Westerners than of any attempts by Indians at reconciling the findings of modern scientists with the knowledge/information contained in the Vedas. Very few of us were interested in or knew Sanskrit. The physicists and aeronautical engineers amongst us knew their science and technology but cared little to read the Vedas or other Hindu texts. The philosophers amongst us knew little Sanskrit, and less physics. Our knowledge of Hinduism was "second hand". In short, there wasn't a Dr. Roy amongst us. A research scientist at the University of Toronto, Roy, a native of Bihar, did his undergraduate work in metallurgical engineering at IIT, Kanpur, and got his M.S. and Ph.D. from Ohio State University in Materials Science and Engineering. That is his engineering and science background. As he says in the preface to his book, he has combined his early learning and training in Sanskrit with his scientific and engineering vocation.

Most of us who are trained as scientists, or social scientists, or who have grown up in modern, technological societies are skeptics when it comes to accepting the "scientific" worth of ancient texts. There are also too many charlatans and too many "men of faith" who are willing to take people for a ride as long as they can sell their religion. Given the trend in modern Indian education too, there are few of us who are willing to spend time digging into the texts of the past. Moreover, Indian texts were considered to be mostly spiritual-religious texts. The latest and most lucrative path is to "deconstruct" the texts through literary, political, philosophical, and psychological analyses. Thus it was that at the last South Asia Conference in Madison in October 1998, there were Sanskritists who "deconstructed" aspects of the Ramayana: one professor, wearing a ring in his left ear, speculated that when Hanuman "grew large" and lifted a mountain and transported it across the sea, it was merely a metaphor for Hanuman getting an erection after watching the many semi-clad

and/or naked beautiful women in the gardens and palaces of Ravana. Professors from Berkeley, Columbia, Harvard and elsewhere cheered and commented on such "exegesis" (or you could say "excesses"), and there was only standing room in the conference hall to listen to such "deconstruction". I bring this up because we are more comfortable with such analyses, and believe they are "modern" and/or "scientific". In such a world it is rather difficult to make a new case for old texts. We believe linguists or literary critics, but we are skeptical of other kinds of "deconstruction," the ones that go against the grain.

The "traditional" take on the Rig Veda therefore would be that of scholars like Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, who has selected, and translated 108 hymns out of the 1017 for a book (*The Rig* Veda) published by Penguins (1981). She basically claims that the Rig Veda contains details of daily life, the symbolism and mechanism of ritual, and that it provides insight into mythology, philosophy, and religion. Very few would argue about those aspects, and most are happy to accept the Rig Veda as such. Even the great commentators like Madhwacharya, or the great works like the Upanishads focus on the "spiritual-psychological-symbolic" aspects of the Vedas. We are happy when traditional texts or teachers tell us that the central teaching and the central aim of the Rig Veda is "the seeking after the attainment of Truth, immortality, and Light," and that the supreme goal of the Vedic sages was discovering the "One Reality". Thus the hymns on creation, especially the *Pirusha Sukta* ("the hymn of man" as it is ordinarily regarded), have been made famous.

According to the traditional reading of the *Pirusha Sukta* the gods created the universe by dismembering the cosmic giant, Pirusha, the primeval male who is the victim in a Vedic sacrifice (O'Flaherty, p. 29). She claims that the theme of cosmic sacrifice is a widespread mythological motif, and it is just a part of the Indo-European corpus of myths of dismemberment. So far, so good, you may say. But Roy argues that the Rig Veda is a book of ancient cosmology "where the authors have chosen fundamental particles and forces of nature to describe the cosmology in a dramatic way...." So, let us see how he interprets the particular verse in the *Pirusha Sukta* (10.90.15): "What does the sacrifice of

Pirusa-animal mean" How can the God himself be sacrificed? The sacrifice here means a change of form, a change from unmanifested form to a form of manifested universe.... As the Pirusa ceased to be what the Pirusa was before the creation, he was symbolically sacrificed. This had nothing to do with human sacrifice" (p. 37-38). Skeptical readers may say, "oh, it is just a little twist to the original formulation". But let us look at just one or two more verses, and see if we the "ordinary" or "literal" meaning makes sense. If it does not, then we need to try and figure out the symbolism. 10.90.01 is translated by O'Flaherty thus: "The Man has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. He pervaded the earth on all sides and extended beyond it as far as ten fingers". A thousand feet and a thousand eyes, we could say, is just a poetic metaphor for "God" who is "everywhere" and "sees everything". But what about the ten fingers? A thousand eyes and now "his" reach only as far as ten fingers? Roy says the ten fingers represent "ten dimensions".

In modern physics direction and dimension are synonymous. Thus, he claims, that in Vedic cosmology universe is seen as ten-dimensional. He quotes the Vayu Purana (4.74-75) in which it is said that the "whole universe including moon, sun, galaxies and planets was inside the egg and the egg was surrounded by ten qualities from outside". Roy provides a more careful context for the reader to speculate about the nature of the universe. There are numerous verses from the different hymns of the "ten books" of the Rig Veda that Roy translates, and provides a "context" which makes better sense than the merely poetic. A careful reader would therefore have the opportunity to compare both Roy's translation of the relevant verse and the analysis of the same.

The next important point that the author makes is that since the Rig Veda is a book of cosmology whatever "history" there is in it is not "real history". Similarly, he says that whatever else is there in it is merely tangential. For the establishment historians and other nay-sayers therefore this is a book that will befuddle and confuse. It is also a book that will undermine their claims about the Aryan invasion of India, for Roy musters some fascinating evidence (see p. 110 and p. 123) to support a fresh interpretation of the Harappan civilization.

Roy is aware of the argument by skeptics that the attempts at finding scientific meanings in scriptures is that they are made only after the discovery of those scientific facts. But the importance of his work is that he has tried to show how the scientific meaning contained in the Vedas is in many ways different from what modern scientists/physicists have put forward. Let us look at the difference. I will just summarize a few major points.

Roy summarizes for us the latest in modern cosmology, from the versions of Big Bang to versions of the Steady State models (Chapter 18). He summarizes their strengths and their weaknesses, and then he adumbrates what he believes (and provides evidence for) is the model that the Rig Veda constructs. The sages considered the universe to be made of "fluid" (not as fluid as in water but "the flow of matter particles"), and that it was rotating. The rotation's effect on this spherical volume of fluid makes it take the shape of a spheroid (the shape of an egg). In the standard Big Bang model the universe is not rotating but its constituents are. The Big Bang theory has been challenged, for example, by those proposing a steady state model, and the book provides quick but precise summaries of those opposing theories. The Big Bang model also proposes that the mass-energy before the universe came into being was concentrated at a single point. The Vedas instead tell us that in the beginning there was no mass-energy. It was a complete void. Ed Tyron in 1973 put forward a theory that makes the same argument.

The Vedic sages considered the creation of mass-energy to be continuous and that it was being created on the surface of the universe. If you wonder how a void can have a surface Roy has some fascinating explanations. In the Vedic model the universe has a centre which is at absolute rest. There is an axis of the universe passing through this centre around which the universe is rotating. Space can be divided into two, manifested and unmanifested, and the creation of matter and antimatter will continue as long as the universe is expanding. While in the Big Bang model the universe can be open or closed, the Vedic model suggests differently. And the cyclic model proposed by scientists, that is the universe will expand and contract continuously is also modified in the Vedic model. It suggests that each cycle is

independent of the other and there is no limitation on how many cycles there can be. Roy supports all his claims by providing the specific location of the verse in the scriptures. The verses have been translated into English, and the scientific meaning of the verse is explained by dissecting the words and providing other supporting evidence from elsewhere in the Vedas.

The work of Roy is important in that he tries to figure out the hidden meanings in the Rig Veda by drawing careful analogies and comparisons, and telling us when he is not sure of a particular meaning of a particular word or hymn. Thus the contracting universe is "Martanda", the living universe Vivasvana, the first pair of particle and anti-particle (matter and anti-matter) are "Yama" and "Manu", the early part of the universe when the surface tension was the most important force constraining the expansion of the universe the battle between these two forces is the immortalized epic battle of Indra and Vrtra. Radiation is Rudra, and the remnants of radiation from the early universe, the cosmic background radiation, is Visha. Brihaspati represents the expansion of the universe, gramya (the domesticated animal) is boson, aranya (wild animal) is fermion, and so on. All of Roy's claims are buttressed by relevant hymns, and he also provides interesting asides on how the myths and fables of other cultures and religions were borrowed from the latter Brahmanas and thus were misreadings and wrong or partial interpretations of Vedic knowledge.

At this point, skeptics may wonder how the Vedic sages knew what they knew. Roy claims that they arrived at their findings and conclusions based on sound reasoning. This may seem like the Vedic sages were the precursors of Descartes! I do wish that he had speculated more deeply on how these ancient people discovered these fascinating truths. What was the Vedic methodology? Was the nature of the universe "revealed" or was it discovered? Readers may think this is a weakness of the book but he, however, makes it plain that modern scientific methods are not the only way one can investigate the "subtle nature of reality" (p. xiii). In his foreword to the book, Dr. Subhash Kak (author/co-author of books on astronomy, mathematics, and computer science, and a leading figure in the re-interpretation of

Vedic knowledge) says: "Roy's basic premise is that the mind - by analysis, reflection on everyday phenomena, and grasping the nature of its own self - can discover a considerable amount of science, and this is what the Vedic rishis did.... Roy's method goes counter to the orthodoxy that outer knowledge cannot be discovered by an analysis of the inner. But there is accumulating evidence from cognitive science and biology that the inner and the outer are connected. For example, biological systems are equipped with clocks tuned to the motions of the sun, the moon, and other astronomical phenomena. Indian thinkers have always insisted on the presence of such connections, claiming that this is how the mind is able to know the physical world. In Vedic thought this is expressed by the notion of 'bandhu' that connect the biological, the terrestrial, and the astronomical.... The Vedic focus on mind and consciousness is paralleled by the central place of the observer in modern physics. In quantum mechanics the state changes in an abrupt fashion when an observation is made and this has prompted some physicists to claim that consciousness should be the primary category of the universe, distinct from physical matter" (p. xiii, xiv).

Christian Contribution to Indian Nation Building

The arrival of St. Thomas to India around AD 50s marks the entry of Christianity nearly 1950 years back. He landed in the Malabar coast and went about doing his work till the Eastern coast and was buried in Chennai, the East coast. Francis Xavier who came to India in the 15th century, also started a new leaf in the historical contribution to Indian life. This paper tries to show some landmark contributions of the Catholic Church made to the mainstream life of India from a Socio-pastoral and sociological perspective. Today India is a nation with over one billion people with different colours, creeds, races ethnic groups, languages and cultures. This mosaic, called India, makes today important contributions in several fields though several see only the face of the advanced number of personnel working in information technology.

Situating India in the World scenario of religions we observe the following: India has given birth to four major religions of the

World: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Hindus form the majority, (82%) in India. Buddhism, that originated in India and flourished till the 6th century A.D., was practically made to quit India and it spread to several countries in Asia, making itself a majority religion in Asian countries. Today Buddhists form only 0.5% in India. Besides Muslims form 12% in the Indian population. In spite of a long history of Christianity, Christians form today only 2.5% of the total population and the Catholics only 1.5% of the total population of India. In spite of this significantly tiny minority character, the Catholic Church in India made praiseworthy contributions in the life and development of Indians.

The aim of this paper is to explore a few areas wherein Catholic Church made significant contributions. Space and time does not allow one to bring out every detail. The main contours will be pointed out in a sociological and Socio-Pastoral perspective in the field of education, health care, Social development, Hindu religious revival movements, contribution to the secular polity of the country, offering of its personnel to the service of the people, and the field of the empowerment of women.

Though Christians and particularly Catholics are a tiny minority, the contribution in the field of education is not only impressive but shows the importance the Church has given to it in the Indian context. At the time of independence of India in 1947 only about 14% of the population were literate. If it has gone up to 55% of the population today, Christianity can be proud in playing its role in it. Some statistics will testify to it.

"The Catholic Church in India runs over 17,000 educational institutions, while over 11,000 are Nursery, Primary and Middle schools. There are also over 1500 professional and technical schools. In the year 2000, Catholic colleges numbered 175 including 2 Engineering and 2 Medical Colleges. What is impressive is that 70% of all these schools are in rural areas, serving the poor, especially the *dalits*, the *adivasis* and other disadvantaged groups. Only a meager 15% of the Church institutions are in the cities and large towns."

"At the close of the 19th century, India had only 26 Christian Colleges. At the time of independence in 1947, the number of Christian Colleges was 62 out of a total of 450. In 2000 Christian

Colleges numbered about 250 out of the 11,089 Colleges. They catered to a total of 135,200 students of whom 28% were catholics. Nearly 50% of the Catholic Colleges are for women only. 17% are for men only and 33% are mixed".

The Church gave a major importance to the education of women and we can proudly say that this led to the enlightenment of Indian women belonging to all religions, castes, tribes and different regions in the modern India. The Church had also given its due attention to technical education, and runs today 1514 technical and vocational training institutions in the country

The historical contribution and breakthrough of the achievement of the Church in the field of education lies in the fact that it broke the monopoly of a single privileged caste and decentralized and democratized education. This made it possible for *dalits* and tribals not only to benefit by it but to have social mobility in life. Education of the masses in urban and particularly in rural areas has been the backbone of the development of India and for bringing about social changes.

Fr. Alex Vadakumthala, the present Secretary of the Health Commission for the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, points out the following unique and specific characteristics of the contributions of the Catholic Church (4).

- Option for the poor and reaching the un-reached are shown by the statistics that 85% of the health care institutions run by the Church in India are in remote villages. Most of these areas are totally or partially deprived of adequate health care and other infrastructures and services.
- Holistic health care is offered by including one's emotional and spiritual care of those who come to these institutions.
- Respect for life and regard for Christian ethical principles is another distinguishing characteristic.

Contribution in the Field of Social Development

The field of social development is another area that drew the attention of the Church. Church has considered social services as a way of demonstrating the compassion of Christ to the Indian Society. Hence specific attention to the development of the poor

and downtrodden was given due importance right from the beginning. In certain areas like the tribal belt the liberation of the tribals from money-lenders and landlords served as the first contribution of the Church. E.g Fr.S.Lievens, Fr.J.B.Hoffmann, etc.

Today the Catholic Church allocates much of its finance in this field *e.g.* for tsunami relief and rehabilitation work it spent 150 million dollars through Caritas India. There are Diocesan Social Service Societies in all the 160 dioceses in India. There is the national organization of Caritas India and Catholic Relief Services and several Regional Societies like Don Bosco Reach Out in the North-East India. The Church changed and evolved in her services from relief and charitable works to Institutional model of educational and health Institutions and from there has adopted the empowerment approach of making the poor self-reliant, able to remake their future by a cooperative and collective action for social transformation.

The grassroots organizations of the poor and the downtrodden in villages are organized by the Church by giving them awareness education and motivation to act collectively. There are today thousands of such groups all over India which attempt to change their lives and build their future through savings, income-generation projects and collective actions to liberate themselves from oppressive forces.

Such actions have earned the anger of the rich and vested interested groups who today plan through fundamentalist groups to attack and eliminate the presence of Christians. You must have heard about the atrocities taking place in Orissa where no help is given to those victims of such attack.

Hindu Religious Revival Movements

In the pre-independence period some religious revival movements emerged. These religions movements were an outcome of the interplay of Socio-economic, political and cultural forces effecting a cultural transaction between Hinduism and Christian models of thought in a society in transition to answer to the existential needs of the people.

Brahmo Samaj (1823) was founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He assimilated several elements from the Western and Christian

models and reformulated Hinduism by a new reinterpretation of the *Vedas*. He introduced a belief in monotheism and denied the caste-system and its ideology. He opposed vehemently child marriage and the practice of *Sati* (burning the widow in the funeral pyres of her husband). He encouraged the Western education system and himself ran several schools. His aim was to revitalize Hinduism without any feeling of antagonism towards other religions and cultures.

Arya Samaj

It was founded by Dayananda Saraswathi in 1875. He tried to reinterpret the *Vedas* to say that the *Vedas* advocate monotheism and was against idolatry. He rejected the caste-system and child-marriage as having no basis in the *Vedas*. He took a different turn than Raja Ram Mohan Roy. "Back to *Vedas*" was his battle-cry to Hindus. He made it obligatory to read, teach, recite and listen to the recitation of *Vedas* which he interpreted in his way as said above. He gave an aggressive character to Hinduism as well as a militant spirit to attack anyone who would talk against Hinduism.

Ramakrishna Mission

It was inspired by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and organized by Narendranath Datta, known as Swami Vivekananda. It had clear overtones of Hindu-Christian cultural transaction.

In Ramakrishna's attitude towards different religions he was both against the militant spirit of Arya Samaj and the reformatory character of Brahmo Samaj. He had a basis in Hinduism with an ecumenical spirit, showing the complementary character of all religions. Thus he would first break the sectarian spirit within Hinduism by validating through his mystical experience the different sectarian Hindu gods and cults and, secondly, he would try to destroy the inter-religious rivalry by realizing a mystical experience of Mohammed and Jesus Christ.

Along with this mystical experience he would introduce the idea of social service to mankind by reinterpreting the *advaitic* principle of the basic unity of God and creatures to be the basis for all social service. Love of one's neighbour was the only form of adoration of God for Ramakrishna.

His disciple Swami Vivekananda founded Ramakrishna Mission on Christmas eve in 1897. Today it adopts several charitable and social works done by Hindus in several areas.

Contribution to the Secular Polity of the Country

"The Christian community has made a significant contribution when in the constituent Assembly, the Christian community through Fr. Jerome D'Souza renounced separate electorate and expressed trust in the majority community to respect and treat the minority community on a par with all as citizens of the country. That was an important contribution of the Christian community to the secular nature of the Constitution of the Republic. For nation building the secular character and ethos of our polity is essential to shape and forge harmony and peace for all people of the country. The Church remains committed to secularity of the Constitution of the Republic. Secular character of the Republic is a positive force for peace and communal harmony in a multicultural and multireligious society that India is."

The Religious Personnel

The Religious personnel working in different fields of Socio-Pastoral involvement is another contribution to the total services offered to build up India.

Of these majority of Religious Sisters and Brothers serve in educational and healthcare institutions. A good number of priests also serve in such institutions and social service societies in the 160 dioceses in India. Practically all of them are professionally qualified and give a professional contribution in the building up of the nation.

Towards the Empowerment of Women

The development of women in different aspects is another specific contribution to the backbone of Indian development. It starts from working for the abolition of girl child feticide in the womb or outside by upholding the ethical values and supporting women to fight against such evil by giving protection to such women and the child they beget. It continues by the education of the girl children through the schools and through the awareness given to women's grassroots groups to educate their girl children.

Their higher education is also supported. One must recall the fact that out of the 220 Catholic Colleges in India 50% are meant only for women and 33% are mixed ones.

The awareness programmes and empowerment of women by thousands of grassroots groups where the Church is actively present, touch the majority of the illiterate adult women. Asserting equal participation in Church participative structures like Diocesan Pastoral Council, parish pastoral council and educating women to demand equal representation in decision-making in micro, semi-macro and macro political structures cannot be ignored by a honest observer as a sincere attempt of empowerment of women by both Catholics and others.

TO CONCLUDE

Besides what has been mentioned above, there have been several other fields like Indian Christian spirituality, Inter-faith dialogue, contribution to linguistic anthropology right from 16th century in several languages in India, contribution to ethnography and Tribal anthropology and Dalit Anthropology, contribution to the formation of the youth, etc. Catholic Church can be compared to leaven working in the mass of the Society. According to different periods this leaven has worked with various degrees of force. Hence it is very often not seen outside. The Church also does not seek publicity as it follows the principle of left hand not knowing what the right hand does.

8

Mohan Roy and Indian Writing in English

Though foreign in its origin, English has been adopted in India as a language of education and literary expression besides being an important medium of communication amongst the people of various regions. The beginning of Indian literature in English is traced to the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, by which time English education was more or less firmly established in the three major centres of British power in India-Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833), a social reformist from Bengal who fought for widow remarriage and voting rights for women, was the pioneer of Indian writing in English. Roy insisted that for India to be included among the world's nations, education in English was essential. He, therefore, campaigned for introduction of scientific education in India through the English medium.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was followed in the early 19th century in Bengal by the poets Henry Derozio and Michael Madhusudan Dutt. Dutt started out writing epic verse in English, but returned to his native Bengali later in life. The poems of Toru Dutt (1855-1876), who died at a tender age of 21, and the novel Rajamohan's Wife by Bankimchandra Chatterjee have received academic acceptance as the earliest examples of Indian literature written in English. Toru Dutt not composed poetry in English, but more interestingly, translated French poetry as well. Her best works include Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan. However, the most famous literary figure of this era was Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 for

his book Gitanjali, which is a free rendering of his poems in Bengali.

Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949) was a great poetess whose romanticism charmed readers in India and Europe. Her Golden Threshold (1905) and The Broken Wing (1917) are works of great literary merit. Aurobindo Gosh (1872-1950) was a poet philosopher and sage, for whom poetry was akin to a form of mediation. His epic, Savitri and Life Divine (2 vols.) are outstanding works in a unique identity of its own. Malgudi is perhaps the single most endearing "character" R.K.Narayan has ever created. Bachelor of Arts (1937), The Financial Expert (1952) The Guide (1959) and Waiting for the Mahatma (1955) are his other popular novels. The last of the harbingers of Indian English literature is Raja Rao (b.1909), whose novel Kanthapura (1938), set in rural India, established him as a major figure on the Indian literary scene. Raja Rao's other three novels are The Serpent and the Rope (1960) and The Cat and Shakespeare (1965). Nirad Choudhuri (1897-1999) was another internationally renowned Indian writer whose autobiography An Unknown Indian (1951) catapulted him into a celebrated international author.

Later novelists like Kamala Markandaya (Nectar in a Sieve, Some Inner Fury, A Silence of Desire, Two Virgins), Manohar Malgaonkar (Distant Drum, Combat of Shadows, The Princes, A Bend in the Ganges and The Devil's Wind), Anita Desai (Clear Light of Day, The Accompanist, Fire on the Mountain, Games at Twilight), and Nayantara Sehgal captured the spirit of an independent India, struggling to break away from the British and traditional Indian cultures and establish a distinct identity.

In the 1980's and 90's, India emerged as a major literary nation. Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children became a rage around the world, even winning the Booker Prize. The worldwide success of Vikram Seth's The Golden Gate made him the first writer of the Indian Diaspora to enter the sphere of international writers and leave an indelible mark on the global literary scene. Other novelists of repute of the contemporary times include Shobha De (Selective Memory), G.V. Desani, M Ananthanarayanan, Bhadani Bhattacharya, Arun Joshi, Khushwant Singh, O.V. Vijayan, Allan Sealy (The Trotternama), Sashi Tharoor (Show Business, The Great

Indian Novel), Amitav Ghosh (Circle of Reason, Shadow Lines), Upamanyu Chatterjee (English August, The Mammaries of the Welfare State), Raj Kamal Jha (The Blue Bedspread), Amit Chaudhuri (A New World), Pankaj Mishra (Butter Chicken in Ludhiana, The Romantics) and Vikram Chandra (Red Earth and Pouring Rain, Love and Longing in Bombay). The latest Indian writer who took the world with a storm was Arundhati Roy, whose The God of Small Things won the 1997 Booker Prize and became an international best-seller. Rohinton Mistry, Firdaus Kanga, Kiran Desai (Strange Happenings in the Guava Orchard), Sudhir Kakar (The Ascetic of Desire), Ardeshir Vakil (Beach Boy) and Jhumpa Lahiri (Interpreter of Maladies) are some other renowned writers of Indian origin.

Former Prime Minister P.V.Narasimha Rao's The Insider; Satish Gujral's A Brush with Life; R.K.Laxman's The Tunnel of Time, Prof. Bipin Chandra's India After Independence, Sunil Khilnani's The Idea of India, J.N.Dixit's Fifty Years of India's Foreign Policy, Yogesh Chadha's Rediscovering Gandhi and Pavan K.Varma's The Great Indian Middle Class are notable works of the recent times.

The mid-20th century saw the emergence of poets such as Nissim Ezekiel (The Unfurnished Man), P Lal, A K Ramanujan (The Striders, Relations, Second Sight, Selected Poems), Dom Moraes (A Beginning), Keki Daruwalla, Geive Patel, Eunice de Souza, Adil Jussawala, Kamala Das, Arun Kolatkar and R. Parthasarathy, who were heavily influenced by literary movements taking place in the West such as Symbolism, Surrealism, Existentialism, Absurdism and Confessional Poetry. These authors used Indian phrases alongside English words and tried to reflect a blend of the Indian and the Western cultures.

Ram Mohan Roy, Translation of an abridgment of the Vedant, or Resolution of all the Veds; the most celebrated and revered work of Brahminical theology; establishing the unity of the Supreme Being; and that He alone is the object of propitiation and worship.

Calcutta, No printer, 1816. Contemporary blindstamped red goatskin (spine darkened and minor chipping). BOUND WITH

RAM MOHAN ROY. Translation of the Cena Upanishad; one of the chapters of the Sama Veda: according to the gloss of the celebrated Shancaracharya: establishing the unity and the sole omnipotence of the Supreme Being and that he alone is the object of worship. Calcutta: Printed by Philip Pereira, at the Hindoostanee Press. 8vo. vii, 11 pp. BOUND WITH RAM MOHAN ROY. Translation of the eshopanishad, one of the chapters of the Yajur Veda: according to the commentary of the celebrated Shankar çcharya; establishing the unity and incomprehensibility of the Supreme Being; and that His worship alone can lead to eternal beatitude. Calcutta: Printed by Philip Pereira, at the Hindoostanee Press. 8vo., xxiii, v, 8 pp. 4to and 8vo. FIRST EDITIONS of these very rare Calcutta publications of the first appearance in English of excepts from the sacred Sanskrit Upanishads, translated and published by Ram Mohan Roy (or Ram Mohan Roy) who is considered by many "the father of modern India."

Of the first work on the resolution of the Veds (Upanishads; Kenopanisad) the OCLC locates only one incomplete copy (Boston Athenaeum); of the second work from the Cena Upanishads OCLC locates only one copy (University of Wisconsin); the last work is from the Sankara Acharya which OCLC finds four copies (Columbia, Harvard, NYPL and Mass Hist. Society). Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1832), a highly educated Bengali brahman from a well-to-do landed family: "also spelled Ram Mohan, Ram Mohan, or Ram Mohan; Indian religious, social, and educational reformer who challenged traditional Hindu culture and indicated the lines of progress for Indian society under British rule. He is sometimes called the father of modern India. "Little is known of his early life and education, but he seems to have developed unorthodox religious ideas at an early age.

As a youth he traveled widely outside Bengal and mastered several languages-Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and later Hebrew, Greek, and English, in addition to his native Bengali and Hindi. "In 1803 he composed a tract denouncing India's religious divisions and superstition. As a remedy for these ills, he advocated a monotheistic Hinduism in which reason guides the adherent to '. the Absolute Originator who is the first principle of all religions.' He sought a philosophical basis for his religious beliefs in the

Upanishads and Vedas, translating these ancient Sanskrit treatises into Bengali, Hindi, and English and writing summaries and treatises on them. The central theme of these texts, for Roy, was the worship of the Supreme God, beyond human knowledge, who supports the universe. By translating the sacred Sanskrit Upanishads into modern Bengali, Roy violated a long-standing tradition, but, in appreciation of his translations, the French Societe Asiatique in 1824 elected him to an honorary membership. "In 1815 Roy founded the short-lived Atmiya-Sabha (Friendly Society) to propagate his doctrines of monotheistic Hinduism. He became interested in Christianity and learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the Old and New Testaments. In 1820 he published the ethical teachings of Christ, excerpted from the four Gospels, under the title Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness.

"In his newspapers, treatises, and books, Roy tirelessly criticized what he saw as the idolatry and superstition of traditional Hinduism. He denounced the caste system and attacked the custom of suttee (ritual burning of widows upon the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands). Roy's actual influence on the British East India Governing Council's prohibition of suttee in 1829 is not clear, but it has been widely accepted that he had the effect of emboldening the government to act decisively on the matter. "Roy's importance in modern Indian history rests partly upon the broad scope of his social vision and the striking modernity of his thought. He was a tireless social reformer, yet he also revived interest in the ethical principles of the Vedanta school as a counterpoise to the Western assault on Indian culture. In his textbooks and treatises he contributed to the popularization of the Bengali language, while at the same time he was the first Indian to apply to the Indian environment the fundamental social and political ideas of the French and American revolutions."

William Adam

William Adam (November 1, 1796-February 19, 1881), born in Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland, began his ministry as a Baptist missionary in India. His labours in India made him into a linguist, a biblical scholar, and a Unitarian. Thereafter for years, Adam tried to elicit support for his work as a Unitarian missionary, first

in India and later in the United States and Canada. His career illustrates the meager support for and the difficulties of Unitarian missionary endeavours of the 19th century.

As a young man Adam was deeply influenced by the famous Scottish churchman Thomas Chalmers. Chalmers interested Adam in India and got him to join the Baptist Missionary Society. The Society sent him for his education to the Baptist College in Bristol and to the University of Glasgow. Adam set out in September, 1817, for William Carey's Baptist mission station in Serampore, India, north of Calcutta. He reached his destination in six months, in March, 1818.

After mastering the classical Sanskrit and Bengali languages, Adam joined a group of men who were revising the Bengali translation of the New Testament. The group included the cordial and scholarly Hindu, Ram Mohan Roy. Roy convinced Adam that the meaning of the Greek preposition dia required that Jn 1:3, a verse of the prologue to John's Gospel, be translated as the Bengali equivalent of the English words, 'All things were made through the Word...' not 'by the Word'. Translators of New Testament Greek in later generations would come to agree, but in 1821 the view of nature of Christ, supported by this translation and espoused by Adam and Ram Mohan, was rejected by orthodox Christians as the Arian heresy (named for the 4th century CE dissident, Arius). For this reason colleagues nicknamed him 'the second fallen Adam'.

Adam soon resigned his position as a Baptist missionary and, along with Ram Mohan and a few other Indian and European friends, formed the Calcutta Unitarian Society. Adam sent ardent appeals to British and American Unitarians for financial support. Support was both slow in coming and quite inadequate when it came. Nevertheless, the Calcutta Unitarian Society remained fitfully active and viable for seven years. But in 1828 its Hindu supporters finally chose to create a new Unitarian form of Hinduism, Brahmo Somaj, leaving behind Unitarian Christianity.

In need of income, Adam turned to clerking and journalism. Working for the British governor of Bengal, he did a three volume census and analysis of native education in Bengal.

With help from the Dixwell family, New England merchants in the India trade, Adam's wife and family left India to go to the United States. Adam followed four years later, in 1838. Travelling from Boston, he attended in London the first meeting of the British India Society, an anti-slavery organization. Members of the Society introduced Adam to leading Garrisonian abolitionists from the United States. When he returned to Boston he took up the position of professor of Oriental Literature at Harvard, which he had been offered before his trip. Adam found Harvard's academic atmosphere did not suit him, however, and he resigned after just one year.

Finding himself consumed by the anti-slavery cause, he returned to London for the World Anti-Slavery Convention in June, 1840. He vigorously protested the exclusion of women from the meetings. Afterward, remaining in London, he began working as editor of the British Indian Advocate, the journal of the British India Society, then called for his family to join him.

Eighteen months later the Adam family once again journeyed to America to join a new utopian community in Massachusetts, the Northampton Association of Education and Industry. Adam became the Association's secretary and director of education. He also invested money in the project, but after control of the capital was taken away from investors, he resigned. For a while the Adam family lived in the town of Northampton. William sought work as a lecturer and conducted classes for Boston women during the winter of 1844-5.

He met Charles Briggs, Secretary of the American Unitarian Association, who told him Unitarian ministers were desperately needed in the "west," which at that time meant west of the Appalachian Mountains. On his way to Illinois, Adam stopped in Syracuse, New York where the Rev. Samuel J. May, also an active Garrisonian, was minister of the Unitarian Church. May told Adam of a new opening for a Unitarian minister in Toronto on the British side of Lake Ontario. After hearing Adam preach, on two Sundays and one mid-week evening in early July, 1845, Toronto Unitarians called him as their first minister.

But the match between minister and congregation was not a good one. After some early success-the securing of a church

building and a strengthening of the congregation-financial problems soured relations. Adam, with a family to support, was feeling constraint. He also felt let down by Charles Briggs, the AUA and Toronto Unitarians. Only the Toronto physician, Joseph Workman, tried hard to raise fit support for him. He resigned and resumed his journey to Illinois. There, within weeks, in late July, 1846, the First Unitarian Church of Chicago, without a minister for two years, called him as minister.

Manuscripts of some of Adam's Toronto and Chicago sermons and lectures survive in Dr. Williams's Library in London. Their titles show the range of issues addressed by this scholarly, socially active world traveler. They include 'Truth and falsehood in man', 'Labour', 'The River and Harbour Convention', and 'Temperance'.

After yet another negative experience in Chicago, Adam withdrew from the Unitarian parish ministry. He is known to have traveled to New Orleans, Louisiana shortly afterward. There is no record of Adam's activities over the next five years. Sometime before 1855, he returned to Britain, perhaps without his family. He is known to have preached in December, 1855, at a small Unitarian church in High Garret, Essex, England. Charles Dall, the missionary to India of the American Unitarian Association, 1855-86, visited Adam in London in 1861 on his way to India. Adam made it clear to Dall that he had altogether renounced Unitarianism and its ministry. He was writing a book critical of Comte's philosophy of history, which was published anonymously that year.

Adam lived obscurely another twenty years. He died at Beaconsfield in Hampshire in 1881, aged 84, and was buried, on his instructions, without ceremony in Woking Cemetery. He left his money to Dumfermline Grammar School for University scholarships, stipulating that the funds should be distributed "irrespective of sex or creed or no creed, parentage, colour or caste, nationality or political allegiance".

Adam was the first international Unitarian of modern times. His convert's enthusiasm was much damped by the lukewarm response of both British and American Unitarians to his requests for their support of his work as a Unitarian missionary in India. Ultimately, he was disappointed in the Unitarian movement as

a whole. At the time Adam regretted that Ram Mohan Roy and his Hindu friends chose a Unitarian Hindu faith in preference to Unitarian Christianity. Yet without Adam's dedicated initiative and drive, the reformed Unitarian Hindu movement, the Brahmo Somaj, might never have come into being. The distinguished leaders of the Brahmo Somaj nurtured and propagated what became, in effect, a 'school of thought', which flowered into the famous Bengal Renaissance, a great burst of modern, yet distinctively Indian political theory, idealism and poetry. The Brahmo Somaj, first established in part by an ill-supported and mostly forgotten Unitarian missionary, influenced immensely the intellectual and political culture of all India.

There are letters from and referring to Adam in the Baptist Missionary Society Library at Didcot, Oxfordshire; in the Houghton Library at Harvard, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and in the anti-slavery collections in the Boston Public Library. The minute book of the Calcutta Unitarian Committee is at Unitarian Headquarters, Essex Hall, London. There are 50 manuscript sermons from the Toronto and Chicago period at Dr. Williams's Library, London. Correspondence regarding Adam's appointment at Harvard is in the Harvard University Archives. The minutes of The Society for the Promotion of Christianity in India and the record of the 1860 conversation between Charles Dall and William Adam are in the Andover Harvard Theological Library. The Dixwell family papers, with their many references to Adam and his family, and the archives of the Northampton Association are at The Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston.

The recent discovery of the Calcutta Unitarian Society minute book gives primary documentary support for the reports published in the Unitarian periodical press in both Britain and America. Letters from, to, and referring to Adam and members of his family appear in Clare Taylor, British and American Abolitionists: an episode in transatlantic understanding (1974); Walter M. Merrill, Collected letters of William Lloyd Garrison (1971); Sophia Dobson Collet, The life and letters of Raja Rammoun Roy, 3rd ed. (1962); and Dilip Kumar Biswas, The Correspondence of Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1997). There are several biographical articles on Adam: S. C. Sanial "the Rev. William Adam", Bengal Past and Present (1914); Andrew Hill, "William Adam: Unitarian Missionary", Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society (1995); and Andrew Hill, "William Adam: a noble specimen", Canadian Unitarian and Universalist Historical Society (1995). For general information on Unitarianism in India, see Spencer Lavan Unitarians and India (1977). For more on the Northampton Association, see Christopher Clark, The Communitarian movement: the radical challenge of the Northampton Association (1995).

New Life for Raja's Tomb

That there's some corner of a foreign cemetery that is forever Bengal is thanks to the generosity of Aditya Poddar, a Calcutta-born and bred businessman who handed over a $100,000 cheque in Arnos Vale cemetery in Bristol yesterday to prevent Raja Ram Mohan Roy's dilapidated tomb from collapsing. "It is a very proud heritage that we have-I want to contribute to that," said Poddar, 39, who studied at St. Xavier's College, Calcutta, after having a broad and secular vision of India ingrained in him at the Scindia School in Gwalior.

Now chairman of a timber company, Wellside International, based in Singapore and with concessions in many Latin American countries, including Panama, Costa Rica and El Salvador, Poddar explained his philosophy-and his sentiments which he said had been echoed in Mira Nair's film, The Namesake.

"Our roots are very important to us," he said. "We relate to where we come from. Heritage is very, very important. As a businessman, you don't want only to make money, you want to contribute back to society because that is where you are making your money."

He readily agreed to donate the entire sum required for renovation work after being approached last year by the mayor of Calcutta, Bikash Ranjan Bhattacharyya, and the municipal commissioner, Alapan Bandyopadhyay, who had visited Arnos Vale cemetery in the company of Rajat Bagchi, minister (coordination) at the Indian high commission in London.

"It is an Indian looking monument," observed Poddar.

Although Ram Mohan Roy was one of the foremost social reformers of India, his story-why he set up the Brahmo Samaj,

how he fought against the practice of sati and undertook a trip to England in 1831 to ensure that Lord Bentick's law abolishing the burning of widows was not reversed by the Hindu men who had hired an English lawyer for that purpose-is almost completely unknown to most Indians in Britain and perhaps a significant section of the diaspora.

The man considered to be "the Father of the Bengal Renaissance" was born, not in 1774, as the inscription on his tomb says, but on May 22, 1772, in Radhanagore, Bengal, the author Krishna Dutta, who was present yesterday, pointed out.

"He was also not a Bahadur (as the inscription also claims)," she said:

> *In 1833, during his visit to England, Ram Mohan Roy accepted an invitation from Lant Carpenter, a sympathetic minister in the Unitarian Church, to stay at his home, Beech House, Stapleton Grove, in Bristol. But the Raja contracted meningitis and died 10 days after arriving on September 27, 1833.*

He was initially buried in the grounds of Beech House in accordance with his own wishes but his remains were reinterred a decade later in Arnos Vale cemetery where the tomb was funded by his friend and a co-founder of the Brahmo Samaj, Dwarkanath Tagore.

Yesterday, Poddar handed over his cheque to a local amateur historian, Carla Contractor-she is married to a Parsi, Phiroze Contractor-who has long campaigned for the restoration of some of the tombs in Arnos Vale, including notably that of Ram Mohan Roy. "I had been trying in vain for a long time but out of the blue, the mayor of Calcutta arrived and offered to find the money to restore the tomb because the Raja is such an important hero in West Bengal," commented Carla, who is a member of the Raja Ram Mohan Roy Trust given responsibility for the restoration work by the Indian high commission in London.

Carla also accepted a £500 cheque from the Brahmo Sammilan Samaj in Calcutta handed over by Rita Bhimani, who had come accompanied by her cricket writer husband, Kishore Bhimani.

The tomb, began Carla, "needs a lot of restoration. The foundations are sinking, the pillars have got cracks down them

because they are in sandstone, the canopy is leaking. Basically, the whole thing needs to be taken down, cleaned, solidified and reassembled. It is a major job but it will be done".

She Promised: "When this is done, it will look as it did in 1842. It was William Princep from Calcutta who designed this tomb and I am in touch with the Princep family."

She described the tomb as "a site of pilgrimage. Whenever I come here (I find) somebody has left flowers, a little memento, something touching. It is a source of pride for the Indian community-and my husband is Indian".

Prayers remembering Ram Mohan Roy as well as Lant's daughter, Mary Carpenter, who nursed the Raja and later visited India four times to do social work, were led by Bernard Omar, president of the Unitarian Church in Bristol.

"Across our different faiths we unite in gratitude to the lives of two great people, one of whom came from India to this country and one, Mary Carpenter, who travelled to India," he said. "Both are buried in this cemetery. We pray in our different ways that they may continue to be remembered and honoured-that the essence of their work may continue. Amen."

Richard Smith, chairman of the Arnos Vale Cemetery Trust, told his Indian guests: "There are somewhere in the region of 50,000 graves and round about 170,000 people buried here. There used to be a crematorium here and over 120,000 people were cremated here as well. This cemetery was set up in 1837 and the first burial was actually in 1839. The crematorium, the first one in the west country, did not start until 1928."

The repair and renovation work will be undertaken to the highest standards under the guidance and watchful eyes of both English Heritage and Bristol City Council. Philip Davies, planning development director for the south of England at English Heritage, declared: "The monument is of very considerable interest and importance in England. It is one of the highest grades of listed buildings for a historical monument in England-Grade Two Star. It is something we are very keen to celebrate and the role of English Heritage here is provide advice and guidance and to make sure that the restoration and repair work is carried out to

the best possible standards and does justice to the monument of such an important man."

He, too, Confirmed: "It is vulnerable, in need of repair and restoration. It is partly the age and vulnerability of the materials that were used originally. This is a very, very important step in conserving a very important monument in England."

He also Said: "It is particularly appropriate to do this in the 60th year of Indian independence. Britain and India have enjoyed a special relationship for 300 years and it is very important that we continue to celebrate this and develop that relationship with tangible projects like the restoration of this monument."

Yesterday, the sun glittered on the gold chains of office worn by The Rt Hon. The Lord Mayor of the City and the County of Bristol, Royston Alan Griffey.

He disclosed that the previous private owner had wanted to sell the cemetery to private developers who had intended either to bulldoze or relocate the memorials and use the land to build residential property.

Griffey Said: "This cemetery was in private ownership and the last 20 years or so it was in terrible condition. The previous private owner was not looking after it so the city (council) had to start compulsory purchase proceedings. That took quite a long time to do)."

He Went On: "That was successful and the compulsory purchase order has fairly recently been confirmed. The ownership was transferred (for a nominal £1) from a private company to Bristol City Council who then, in turn, transferred it to some trustees to look after the restoration of this beautiful cemetery, including the Raja's tomb."

He Insisted: "Without the city taking back the cemetery I am afraid it would have been in a very, very badly neglected state and it would have eventually deteriorated and a lot of the monuments, including this tomb, would have collapsed." He also believed the Raja's message had contemporary relevance. "I certainly do-the Raja has the benefit of not one but two statues in Bristol. There is one outside the Bristol Council offices, a full-length statue, very imposing in robes, but inside the Council

House is also a smaller statue, a bust of the Raja. And Bristol is interested in India because there is a large Indian population in the city."

He Commented: "Of course, he was a great man, benefactor, linguist, ahead of his time with human rights. I am a lawyer so I know how difficult battles can be to achieve civil liberties and human rights."

He was frank about Bristol's dark past, in every way as shameful as sati. "This is the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade act passed in 1807 and we have been having commemorations in Bristol and other places-Liverpool, London, Hull-who were also ports involved with the slave trade. Bristol was one of the major trading posts in the triangular trade-ships from Bristol went to west Africa and then over to the Caribbean and North America and then back to Bristol with tobacco and other products."

Alapan Bandyopadhyay, the Calcutta's municipal commissioner, paid tribute to the dedication shown by Carla.

"Carla had taught at Sophiya College in Bombay-and she rediscovered Raja Ram Mohan Roy. She rightly thinks mere restoration is not enough unless the memory is kept alive. The trust could repair other conservation projects. The cause could be made wider."

Indian Philosophic Prose in English

The use of English for the exposition of Indian philosophy has opened up new avenues of interpretation involving pluralistic responses and redefinitions growing out of already existing tenets. Beginning as it does with the predominantly zealous missionary approach, which was an attempt by thinkers such as Carey, Marshman, Ward, Monier-Williams and others to find footholds for Christianity, through the memorable episode of European philosophical responses to India represented by Hegel, Schelling and Schopenhauer, followed by the Orientalists of the stature of Muller and Farquhar responding to the neo-Hindu inclusivism of Ramakrishna, Keshab Chandra Sen, Vivekananda and such others, to the later engagement and preoccupation with ideas of Indian philosophy by eminent Indians for social reform and national and

cultural revival-the dimensions of Indian philosophic prose in English spread over areas as diverse and extensive as politics, religion, sociology, economics, ethics, culture, spirituality and so on, thus putting an end to narrow, authoritarian, critical tenets prescribed for the study of philosophy. Also, here the foregrounding of English as a language of discourse where the original Sanskrit is no longer privileged offers an important shift in the politics of Indian thought.

The continuing tension between Western responses and indigenous interpretations, the conceptual frames formulated to accommodate Western assumptions in order to invest Indian thought with a sense of universal acceptability, the impact of Indian philosophic and religious texts on the Western consciousness, and their global dissemination due to the use of English have considerably altered the philosophic and religious maps of the world.

Considering this, it is interesting to approach the issue in question from the perspective of New Historicism. In his seminal work The New Historicism Reader (published in 1994 by Routledge) Aram Veeser gives the five fundamental assumptions of New Historicism thus: 1) every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices; 2) every act of unmasking, critique and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risks falling prey to the practice it exposes; 3) literary and non-literary 'texts' circulate inseparably; 4) no discourse, imaginative or archival, gives access to unchanging truths or express unalterable human nature; and 5) a critical method and a language adequate to describe culture under capitalism together participate in the economy they describe.

The present paper attempts a survey of the New Historicist perspective of Indian philosophic prose in English based on these assumptions.

Embedded Texts: Written and Non-Written

The expressive acts of Indian philosophy from its earliest oral tradition-the Vedas, Vedanta, Puranas, Itihasas, Yoga, Mimamsa, bhakti poetry and music-have been influenced by and in their turn have also influenced the dominant material practices of their respective ages. Coming to the origin and development of Indian

philosophic prose in English over the last two centuries, the discussions generally begin with Raja Ram Mohan Roy, whose contribution most often acclaimed is largely restricted to the field of political and social activism. This marginalizes the fact that these had their foundation in his vast acquaintance with Hindu philosophic texts which he commented upon in English. Till recently his writings have failed to receive due recognition. The quality of embeddedness indicated by Roy's Vedanta Chandrika and such other works is as obvious as it is in Vivekananda's thoughts on the Upanishads and the Bhagavadgita. Gandhi's use of ahimsa, the dominant ideal of Jainism, to give direction to the nationalist movement, Tilak's reinterpretation of the Bhagavadgita in justification of the lesson of violence for justice taught to Arjuna, Dayananda Saraswati's 'purification' of Vedic knowledge for inculcating a temper of self-confidence and his insistence on the universal global significance of the Vedic teachings are all illustrations of one crucial idea: in all of these philosophy was a response to the external challenges of life.

Philosophy as an academic discipline was more or less the forte of British intellectuals teaching in India. One of the first notable Indian representatives of the academic aspect of philosophy and its concepts was K. C. Bhattacharya, who was followed in this task by his son Kalidas, his student R. V. Das and his admirers G. K. Malkani and T. R. V. Murti.

Subversion and Conformity

Though much of this early philosophic engagement was a subversion, directly or indirectly, of English hegemony, it is noteworthy that the basic act of condemnation also involved an act of conformity. For instance, European models of philosophic discourse were widely accepted and emulated. Ram Mohan Roy's particular hermeneutic system appeals to and reflects upon different traditions, simultaneously appropriating the alien while he asserts himself to be against the alien.

Though the terms 'Renaissance' and 'Reformation/Revival' have been commonly associated with the rise of Indian philosophic prose written in English, the term 'neo-Hinduism' is preferred in academic contexts. This brings to the fore the debate about suitable

terminology and lexicographic problems which received much attention from thinkers such as Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. The Sanskrit exclusivism and the vernacular popularized by the Pali canon brought out ideas such as Buddhism being the fulfilment of Hinduism and the approach to ancient systems through the concept of practical Vedanta. Similarly the support of Hindu orthodoxy by people like Madan Mohan Malaviya resulted in the uplift of untouchables, who were then designated as 'harijans', the people of God.

Fluidity of Discursive Truth

Philosophy was no longer merely metaphysical speculation aimed at bringing out the intellectual brilliance of thinkers; instead it gained ethical and social currency. It acquired an imaginative and symbolic dimension, became more descriptive and contemplative. For instance, the literary masterpieces of Bankim Chandra underlined the philosophic ideal of anushilana (repeated practice); Rabindranath Tagore, in his turn, advocated a personalistic absolutism and considered beauty and harmony of God's creative act as a fitting subject for both literature and philosophy.

The source of inspiration in the case of Devendranath Tagore was his own heart, in contradistinction to the privilege given to revelatory scriptures by other Brahmos. Here the fourth of Veeser's assumptions comes into play because both imaginative and archival discourse shows the alterable nature of truth. Keshab Chandra Sen borrowed from Christianity, while Vivekananda categorized the West as materialistic/pragmatic and the East as spiritual/impractical. Aurobindo attempted to establish the identity of Hinduism not by return to the past nor by asserting its timeless validity; for him it was the source of vitality and change, openness for question and experiment. Coomaraswamy spoke in defence of tradition in Hinduism through his criticism of Radhakrishnan, who, he felt, had failed in the task of actualizing and modernizing the tradition, as had several others. Krishnamurti did not show allegiance to any particular philosophic system or tradition and spoke of spiritual truths as lying deep within oneself, to be realized by one's own effort.

It was the unique privilege of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Ramana Maharshi to bring an experiential dimension to the expression of philosophic truths. The tolerance and universal dimension of Ramakrishna's spiritual message and the silence of Ramana, which is as eloquent as his words of wisdom, bring new levels of truth to philosophic discourse. But, of course, this was not the last word. It has been said that Vivekananda's use of the teachings of his guru Ramakrishna was styled in his own peculiar way to suit his purpose, for his ideas of mass-education and philanthropy were not directly mirrored in the teachings of Ramakrishna.

Discourse as Participation

Talking of the last of Veeser's assumptions, the long engagement of thinkers all over the world with Indian philosophy imparts it a market value not far to seek. The appearance of Vivekananda at the Chicago Parliament of Religions in 1893 was the beginning of Indian thought's taking root in American soil. At the outset it was 'Vedanta and the West' but by the turn of the last century the juxtaposing conjunction 'and' had been replaced significantly by a preposition of involvement-'in'-so that now one speaks of 'Vedanta in the West'. Popular forms such as Transcendental Meditation, International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), and personalities like Rajneesh, Mahesh Yogi, Swami Rama and others have captured the Western imagination.

Radhakrishnan, notwithstanding his alleged lack of originality, was one of the most successful spokespersons for neo-Hinduism in the West-as memorable as he was persuasive. His relentless crusade began with his objection to the European verdict of ethical deficiency in Hinduism in addition to its unsuitability to scientific progress. B N Seal went a step further and upheld the potential of Hinduism to bring about a European renaissance. Bhagavan Das articulated the opinion that philosophy should not be an end in itself as it was in Europe-a more or less intellectual engagement. He advocated the need for a practical philosophy helpful to man and society. P R Damle viewed the future of Indian philosophy as one of revival and constructive exposition of non-monistic and

non-idealistic systems of thought. In all of these, the attempt is to make philosophy acquire a saleable value and the oft-repeated attempt to justify it in scientific terms of reference is just one more attempt in this direction.

Finally, it is significant that the terms darshana and tattvajnana, which are often used synonymously for philosophy in India, are pointers to the fact that philosophy has always been a mode of living, viewed as a perception that gives life its balance. Since philosophy is only one of the modes of presenting Indian thought to the world, it has to be seen in conjunction with literature, art and other areas of intellectual endeavour. As the New Historicist contention underlines, literary and non-literary texts circulate inseparably and therefore a complete picture is one which keeps all modes of presentation in view before any conclusive documentation is given shape.

9

BRAHMO SAMAJ

Brahmo Samaj is the societal component of Brahmoism. According to J.N Farquahar, "It is without doubt the most influential socio-religious movement in the evolution of Modern (Greater) India." It was conceived as reformation of the prevailing Bengal of the time and began the Bengal Renaissance of the 19th century pioneering all religious, social and educational advance of the Hindu community in the 19th century. From the Brahmo Samaj springs Brahmoism, the most recent of legally recognised religions in India and Bangladesh, reflecting its non-syncretic "foundation of Ram Mohan Roy's reformed spiritual Hinduism (contained in the 1830 Banian deed) and scientifically invigorated by inclusion of root Hebraic-Islamic creed and practice."

Meaning of Names

For Modern usage reflecting subsequent Legislation, Constitution and Legal rulings see Brahmo.

The Brahmo Samaj is a community of people assembled for orderly public meeting, discussion or worship of the Eternal, Immutable Supreme Being, Author and Preserver of the Universe, "but not under or by any other name designation or title peculiarly used for and applied, to any particular being or beings by any man or set of men whatsoever". Brahmo literally means "one who worships Brahman", and Samaj mean "community of men".

History and Timeline

On 20 August 1828 the first assembly of the Brahmo Sabha (progenitor of the Brahmo Samaj) was held at the North Calcutta

house of Feringhee Kamal Bose. This day is celebrated by Brahmos as Bhadrotsab. This Sabha was convened at Calcutta by religious reformer Raja Ram Mohan Roy for his family and friends settled there. The Sabha regularly gathered on Saturday between seven o'clock to nine o'clock. These were essentially informal meetings of Bengali Brahmins (the "twice born"), accompanied by Upanishadic recitations in Sanskrit followed by Bengali translations of the Sanskrit recitation and singing of Brahmo hymns composed by Ram Mohan. These meetings were open to all Brahmins and there was no formal organisation or theology as such.

On 8 January 1830 influential progressive members of the closely related Kulin Brahmin clan (scurrilously described as Pirali Brahmin *i.e.* ostracised for service in the Mughal Nizaamat of Bengal) of Tagore (Thakur) and Roy (Vandopadhyaya) zumeendar family mutually executed the Trust deed of Brahmo Sabha for the first Adi Brahmo Samaj (place of worship) on Chitpore Road (now Rabindra Sarani), Kolkata, India with Ram Chandra Vidyabagish as first resident superintendent.

On 23 January 1830 or 11th Magh, the Adi Brahmo premises were publicly inaugurated (with about 500 Brahmins and 1 Englishman present). This day is celebrated by Brahmos as Maghotsab.

In November 1830 Ram Mohan Roy left for England.

Decline of Brahmo Sabha

With Ram Mohan's departure for England in 1830, the affairs of Sabha were effectively managed by Trustees Dwarkanath Tagore and Pandit Ram Chandra Vidyabagish, with Dwarkanath instructing his diwan to manage affairs. Weekly service were held consonant with the Trust directive, consisting of three successive parts: recitation of the Vedas by Telegu Brahmins in the closed apartment exclusively before the Brahmin members of the congregation, reading and exposition of the Upanishads for the general audience, and singing of religious hymns.

The reading of the Vedas was done exclusively before the Brahmin participants as the orthodox Telegu Brahmin community and its members could not be persuaded to recite the Vedas before Brahmins and non-Brahmins alike.

By the time of Ram Mohan's death in 1833 near Bristol (UK), attendance at the Sabha dwindled and the Telugu Brahmins surreptitiously revived idolatry. The zumeendars, being preoccupied in business, had little time for affairs of Sabha, and flame of Sabha was almost extinguished.

Tattwabodhini Period

In 1839 Debendranath Tagore, son of (Prince) Dwarkanath Tagore, founded the Tattwabodhini (Truth-seekers) Sabha.

Foundation of Samaj

On 7th Pous 1765 Shaka (1843) Debendranath Tagore and twenty other Tattwabodhini stalwarts were formally invited by Pt. Vidyabagish into the Trust of Brahmo Sabha. The Pous Mela at Shantiniketan starts on this day which is considered as foundation of the 'Adi' (First) Brahmo Samaj which was named the Calcutta Brahmo Samaj.

First Schism

The admittance of Keshub Chandra Sen (a non-Brahmin) into the Calcutta Brahmo Samaj in 1857 while Debendranath was away in Simla caused considerable stress in the movement, with many old Tattvabodhini Brahmin members leaving the Samaj and institutions due to his high-handed ways. These events took place intermittently from 1859, coming to a head publicly between the period of 1 August 1865 till November 1866 with many tiny splinter groups styling themselves as Brahmo. The most notable of these groups styled itself "Brahmo Samaj of India". This period is referred to in the histories of these secessionists as the "First Schism".

Spread of Influence

Although the Brahmo Samaj movement was born in Kolkata, the idea soon spread to the rest of India. That happened to be the period when the railways were expanding and communication was becoming easier. Outside Bengal presidency some of the prominent centres of Brahmo activity were: Punjab, Sind, and Bombay and Madras presidencies. Even to this day, there are several active branches outside West Bengal. Bangladesh Brahmo Samaj at Dhaka keeps the lamp burning.

Social & Religious Reform

In all fields of social reform, including abolition of the caste system and of the dowry system, emancipation of women, and improving the educational system, the Brahmo Samaj reflected the ideologies of the Bengal Renaissance. Brahmoism, as a means of discussing the dowry system, was a central theme of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's noted 1914 Bengali language novella, Parineeta.

Focus of Modern Brahmo Reform:

- Denunciation of polytheism,
- Rejection of the caste system and its abolition,
- Rejection of the dowry system and its abolition,
- Emancipation of women,
- Widow remarriage,
- Reform of educational system,
- Opposition to sati (the practice of burning widows alive),
- Spread of knowledge by universal access to information,
- Legal reform especially in fields of personal and secular law,
- Simplicity and purity in public and private affairs
- Opposing corrupting influences like intoxicants, television, devadasi system, politicians etc.

After controversies, including the controversy over Keshub Chunder Sen's daughter's child marriage rituals wherein the validity of Brahmo marriages were questioned, the Brahmo Samaj Marriage Bill of 1871 was enacted as the Special Marriages Act of 1872 and set the age at which girls could be married at 14. All Brahmo marriages were thereafter solemnised under this law which required the affirmation "I am not Hindu, nor a Mussalman, nor a Christian". The Special Marriages Act 1872 was repealed by the new Special Marriages Act in 1954 which became the secular Marriage law for India. The old Special Marriages Act of 1872 was allowed to live on as the Hindu Marriage Act 1955 for Hindus-Brahmo Religionists are excluded from this Act; which is applicable, however, to Hindus who follow the Brahmo Samaj. On May 5,

2004 the Supreme Court of India, by order of the Chief Justice, dismissed the Government of West Bengal's 30 year litigation to get Brahmos classified as Hindus. The matter had previously been heard by an 11 Judge Constitution Bench of the Court (the second largest bench in the Court's history). As of 2007 the statutory minimum age for Brahmos to marry is 25(M)/21(F) versus 21(M)/18(or 15F) for Hindus.

It also supported social reform movements of people not directly attached to the Samaj, such as Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's movement which promoted widow remarriage.

Doctrine

The following doctrines, as noted in Renaissance of Hinduism, are common to all varieties and offshoots of the Brahmo Samaj:

Brahmo Samajists have no faith in any scripture as an authority.

Brahmo Samajists have no faith in Avatars.

Brahmo Samajists denounce polytheism and idol-worship.

Brahmo Samajists are against caste restrictions.

Brahmo Samajists make faith in the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth optional.

The renaissance in modern Indian literature begins with Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Roy was born in Radhanagar village in west Bengal's Hooghly district on May 22, 1772, to conservative Bengali Brahmin parents. His father Ramakanta Roy's family belonged to the Vaisnava (who worship Lord Vishnu-the Preserver; followers of Sri Caitanya Maha Prabhu) a liberal sect that flourished in Bengal and South India.

His mother Tarini Devi's orthodox priestly family (Bhattacharyas of Chatra) on the other hand belonged to the Shakta sect (worshippers of Goddess Kali-the Shakti-the Mother Energy of the universe). Roy did his elementary education in the village school in Bengali, his mother tongue. At the age of 12, Roy went to a seat of Muslim studies in Patna where he mastered Persian and Arabic. His knowledge of Arabic enabled him to read the Koran in the original, as well as the works of Sufi saints. He also devoured Arabic translations of the works of Aristotle and Plato.

When he was 16, Royclashed with his orthodox father on the issue of idol worship and left home. Toacquaint himself with the Buddhist religion, he travelled across northern India and Tibet for the next three years. Hisquestioning mind objected to the deification of the Buddha and this did not godown well with some of the lamas. He then visited Varanasi where he learnt Sanskrit and studied ancient Hindu scriptures.

In 1803, he secured a job with the East India Company and in 1809, he was posted to Rangpur. In Rangpur, he learnt about Jainism and studied the Jaintexts. Roy was drawn to certain aspects of Christianity that led some of the followers of the religion to suggest that he convert; but he politely declined.

Roy's understanding of the different religions of the world helped him to compare them with Vedantic philosophy and garner the best from each religion. Sufi mysticism had a great influence on Roy. He loved to repeat three of their maxims: "Man is the slave of benefits"; "The enjoyment of the worlds rests on these two points-kindness to friends and civility to enemies"; and "The way of serving God is to do good to man".

To pursue his interests, Roy resigned from the East India Company a few years later and came to Calcutta in 1814. Dissatisfied with the system of education and the rote method of teaching English, he formed an association of English and Hindu scholars. He also invested his own money in the starting of a school where he introduced subjects like science, mathematics, political science and English. Roy felt that an understanding of these" modern" subjects would give Indians a better standing in the world of the day. Though initially antagonistic towards British rule in India, Roy later began to feel that the country would benefit in terms of education and by exposure to the good points of Christianity. For this he was called a stooge of the British.

Along with a group of like-minded people, Roy founded the Atmiya Sabha in 1814. The group held weekly meetings at his house; texts from the Vedas were recited and theistic hymns were sung. Roy was drawn to the Unitarian form of Christianity that resulted in him supporting a Unitarian Mission to be set up in Calcutta in 1824.

In the early 1800s, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland sent Reverend Alexander Duff, a young and dedicated missionary, to Kolkata to set up an English-medium institution. Though Bengalis had shown some interest in the spread of Western education from the beginning of the 19th century, both the local church and government officers were skeptical about the high-caste Bengali's response to the idea of an English-medium institution. Raja Ram Mohan Roy helped by organizing the venue and bringing in the first batch of students. He also assured the guardians that reading the Bible did not necessarily imply religious conversion. Although his ultimate aim was the spread of English education, Duff was aware that without a good command on one's native language, it was impossible to master a foreign language. Hence in his General Assembly's Institution (as later in his Free Church Institution), the teaching and learning of the Bengali language and literature was given high priority. Duff was keen on sports and had accumulated different kinds of sports-related equipment for use in his institution. When he introduced political economy as a subject in the curricula, the Church strongly criticized him.

In 1840, Duff returned to India. At the Disruption of 1843, Duff sided with the Free Church. He gave up the college buildings, with all their effects and with unabated courage, set to establish a new institution, which came to be known as the Free Church Institution. He had the support of Sir James Outram and Sir Henry Lawrence, and the encouragement of seeing a new band of converts, including several young men born of high caste. In 1844, governor-general Viscount Hardinge opened government appointments to all who had studied in institutions similar to Duff's institution. In the same year, Duff co-founded the Calcutta Review, of which he served as editor from 1845 to 1849. These two institutions founded by Duff, *i.e.*, the General Assembly's Institution and the Free Church Institution would be merged later to form the Scottish Churches College. After the unification of the Church of Scotland in 1929, the institution would be known as Scottish Church College.

Along with Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the father of modern India, Dr. Duff played a significant role in supporting Lord Macaulay

in drafting his famous Minute for the introduction of English education in India. Successive eminent missionary scholars from Scotland, *viz.* Dr. Ogilvie, Dr. Hastie, Dr. Macdonald, Dr. Stephen, Dr. Watt, Dr. Urquhart and others contributed to the spread of the liberal Western education.

Along with other educational institutions like Serampore College, Hindu College, the Scottish Churches College played a pivotal role in ushering the spirit of intellectual enquiry and a general acceptance of the ideals of the European Enlightenment, among Bengalis, in what came to be regarded as the Young Bengal Movement and later, the Bengal Renaissance.

Duff's contemporaries included such luminaries as Reverend Mackay, Reverend Ewart and Reverend Thomas Smith. Till the early 20th century the norm was to bring teachers from Scotland (like William Spence Urquhart, Leslie Stephen, H.M. Percival, Ian Fairweather etc.) but eminent Indian scholars were also engaged as teachers by the college authorities. Scholars like Surendranath Banerjea, Kalicharan Bandyopadhyay, Jnan Chandra Ghosh, Gouri Shankar Dey, Adhar Chandra Mukhopadhyay Sushil Chandra Dutta, Mohimohan Basu, Sudhir Kumar Dasgupta, Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, Bholanath Mukhopadhyay and Kalidas Nag had all contributed hugely to enhance the academic standards of the college.

Dr. Duff played a leading part in founding the University of Calcutta in 1857, he was associated with the Agro-horticultural Society and the establishment of a medical college, the first in India. He also aimed at breaking down caste-barriers by founding several girls schools. The Scottish Church College played a pioneering role in women's education as well as co-education in the country. Female students comprise half the present roll strength of the college. With the added interest of the missionaries in educational work and social welfare, the college stands as a monument to Indo-Scottish co-operation. The aims and principles of the College are essentially those of its founder namely, the formation of character through education based on Christian teaching.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) was born into a Brahmin family in Bengal and experienced the orthodox practices of

Hinduism in his youth. He studied the Quran, Buddhism and the New Testament. He disliked Idol worship and hated the practice of Sati, after seeing his brother's widow burnt alive on her husband's funeral fire. He fought to abolish polytheism, idol worship, the caste system, child marriage, animal sacrifice and Sati which is the practice of a widow being burnt alive on the funeral pyre.

In 1828, Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj (Society of Brahma) in an attempt to reform Hindu religious beliefs and practices. Brahmo Samaj's hall of worship has no images, statues or pictures. Only prayers and Hymns are sung, selecting one God for concentrating their prayers. Members offered prayers as a group. This community worship was a new aspect to Hinduism. The form of worship under Brahmo Samaj system was based on the Christian school of thought as the founder was inspired by the Western ideas. The Samaj inspired progressive development in Hindu Society, religion and politics.

The indirect result of the reform movement of Ram Mohan Roy was the abolition of Sati, child marriage, untouchability, caste distinction, and established women's right to property and widow remarriage.

Vedic Physics by the 33-year old Dr. Raja Ram Mohan Roy is an ambitious work by a physical scientist who-thanks to his upbringing in a traditional household-also had the benefit of a Vedic schooling from childhood. His goal is to show that the Vedas, in keeping with their name meaning 'knowledge', contain a good deal of scientific knowledge that was lost over millennia, which he seeks to recover by suitably interpreting them. In particular, he regards the Rigveda as a book on particle physics and cosmology that has much in common with modern physics, but sometimes more subtle, especially when it comes to explaining the origin and evolution of the universe.

Such a claim is of course not new; there is no shortage of books claiming that the Vedic seers had seen everything and modern science is only a rediscovery. The author makes no such claim. His position is that by following a path of discovery quite different from that followed by modern science, the Vedic sages had arrived at a model of the universe, supported by a theory of atomic and subatomic particles that bears some similarity to modern physics;

but Vedic cosmology is quite different from modern theories of the universe. What lends credence to the author's claim is his comprehensive grasp of modern physics. This allows him to construct-possibly reconstruct-a Vedic model of the universe that avoids some of the difficulties of modern theories like the Big Bang.

This may sound similar to some other books on the subject like Fritj of Capra's Tao of Physics, but there are important differences. For one, the author's grasp of the Vedic texts is surer, based on primary readings and often, original interpretations. Next, he offers some remarkable insights that go beyond contemporary knowledge of cosmology and even physics. Most significantly, he reconstructs a theory of the universe that may be a serious competitor to modern theories like the Big Bang. In other words, he is not satisfied with a comparison between Vedic knowledge and modern science; his goal is it to shed new light on important problems of nature. His approach is based on a careful reading of Vedic texts combined with a firm grasp of science. And therein lies the book's strength.

Before going into the details of Mr. Roy's book, it is useful to have an idea of different approaches to the study of the Rigveda. The most widely known is the nineteenth century reading favoured mostly-but not exclusively-by Western Indologists, which holds the Rigveda to be the record of 'Aryan invaders' from Eurasia and their conquest of India then populated by dark skinned natives. This has justly fallen into disrepute though some Western academics and their Indian followers continue to cling to some variant of it if only because they have nothing better. It is not hard to see that two dominant nineteenth century European ideas-colonial conquests and racism-went into this interpretation though political and Christian missionary interests also had major influence. The values underlying this version have fallen into disrepute, but their creation called 'Indology' continues to hold sway in academia, though it is rapidly crumbling.

When we turn to Indian interpretations, we run into problems of a different kind-break in tradition. Although we look at the four Vedas as from a single genre, there is considerable difference between the Rigveda and the other three. To take an example, the

same verses from the Rigveda that appear in the Yajurveda are sometimes read and even interpreted differently.

Where the Yajurveda is generally treated as 'Karma-kanda'-or what may loosely (and incorrectly) be called 'ritualistic', the real meaning and purpose of the Rigveda remains something of a mystery. This is by no means a recent phenomenon. The ancient commentator Yaska (c. 3100 BC) tells us that even in his time scholars no longer had the intuitive grasp of the Vedic hymns that the ancients possessed. For whatever reason, even before the third millennium, the true meanings of the Rigveda had been greatly diluted if not lost, and various artificial interpretations like Karma-kanda came to be imposed on them.

Another point to be kept in mind is the extreme sophistication of structure and language of the Rigveda. Even superficially seen, its metrical forms and linguistic structures are the most sophisticated the world has even known. To go with this, its language, far from being elaborate, is concise yet flexible-at times bafflingly so. As Sri Aurobindo observed, the Vedic language is "just and precise and sins rather by economy of phrase than by excess, by over-pregnancy rather than by poverty of sense." From this it is possible to see that the Rigveda records not the beginning of a civilization but a culmination, containing knowledge-or 'Veda'-coded in the form of what we call Rigvedic hymns. In other words, the language of the Rigveda could well be technical in nature, like what we find in a modern book on physics or mathematics. A convincing key to unlocking this body of knowledge remains to be found. This is what the author in his book has set out to do.

In his words: "Most of the verses in the Vedas are mysterious. This is so because we don't know the actual scientific meaning of these verses. My aim in furnishing complete hymns is to give my learned readers as much information as possible, so that they can help in finding the lost Vedic science." His book is an admirable step in that direction, and, as this review seeks to explain, a great deal more.

The message of the book under review may be summarized as follows: one of the keys to unlocking the secrets of the Rigveda consists in reading many of the words like 'gau' and 'ashva' as well

as names of gods like 'Marut' and 'Indra' as technical terms used in the natural sciences, and the hymns themselves as descriptions of laws of nature. In other words, the Rigveda contains a description of the forces of nature and the laws that govern them, written in cryptic even coded language. The author's goal is to extract their meaning by making sense of important hymns that appear enigmatic or even incoherent when interpreted in a conventional way. Though his effort cannot be considered complete, it nonetheless sheds new light on important Vedic passages.

For example, in the Vedic literature we have frequent statements like 'agni was pashu' and 'pashus are agneya' that make no sense when read literally. The author, however, identifies 'pashu' with particle and 'agni' with energy. Then a whole series of Vedic passages including the ones just cited become comprehensible and even coherent. Similarly, he identifies Vayu with field-one of the most important concepts in physics. Surya of course stands for light, and the seven horses yoked to Surya's chariot are the seven colours of the light spectrum. The word 'gau' (cow), which Yaska tells us also means light, actually refers to the particle state of light or the photon. Based on his approach, the author suggests that the great Rigvedic hymn 1. 123 by Dirghatamas, actually describes the creation and annihilation of particles, which some liken to Shiva's Dance of Creation. It should be emphasized that this brief description-necessarily simplified-does not do full justice to the author's interpretations.

This approach offers some interesting possibilities. The author observes: "Our universe is matter dominated. If matter and antimatter are created together in same amount, then we should find equal amount of antimatter. Whyis it we don't find much evidence of antimatter as far as we can observe? Are remote parts of the universe antimatter dominated? Did matter and antimatter somehow get segregated in different corners of the universe? Scientists don't think so. Scientists believe that when universe was very young, for some reason a small excess of matter over antimatter was generated. As matter and antimatter annihilated each other, this small excess remained, and this small excess is our universe. The Vedas take a different view. According to the Vedas, matter and energy are constantly being created at the

surface of the universe, and there is an imbalance in their creation. Matter and antimatter continually annihilate each other and the small excess of matter has accumulated over the age of the universe." This is a profoundly different cosmic view, which the author supports with the help of Rigvedic passages including 2.20.7 and 6.47.21. The latter may be read as: "Everyday Indra removes half of the people, similar to the other half but black in colour, born in his house." (The author uses the past tense, which I have rendered into the present following Panini's rule for the Vedic usage: chandasi lung lat litah.) The author goes on to observe: "Indra is considered responsible for killing the black people in the Rigveda. As matter and antimatter are attracted towards each other due to the opposite nature of electric charge resulting in annihilation, electric force is indeed responsible for this phenomenon."

So black refers to antimatter! In addition to the author's remarkably original reading of an obscure passage, it highlights the utter superficiality of European Indologists and their Indian followers in giving such passages a racial meaning. If the author's insights can be supported, this is the kind of knowledge that was lost over the millennia. There is evidence however, that some fragments of it survived as late as the time of Sayana (1315-87). In his Rigveda Bhashya he gives a value for the velocity of light that in modern units works out to 186,000 miles per second. So it is not easy to dismiss the author's interpretations as speculation, obtained by 'retrofitting' modern scientific findings on to the Vedas. In any event, the Vedic cosmology worked out by the author has important differences with modern theories of the universe.

After presenting his interpretation of Vedic passages in the light of modern physics, the author gives a lucid summary of modern theories (Big Bang and Steady State) followed by a discussion of the Vedic model. He points out some of the basic problems of the Big Bang theory, highlighting the following: singularity, horizon, flatness, age, monopole, entropy and antimatter. He discusses the same problems in the Vedic context and shows how they may be elegantly accounted for. This can be illustrated with the help of the singularity problem. In the author's words:

"Universe started with an explosion according to the Big Bang model. At time equal to zero, all the mass-energy was concentrated in a point. This is certainly an unimaginable feat, as the universe is immense.

According to Pauli's exclusion principle, not even two electrons can occupy the same state, and here the whole universe is considered to be inside a point....

The situation is a direct result of the conservation of mass and energy [or mass-energy], the most sacred principle of physics. Considering that the universe is expanding, extrapolating backward in time, the universe was as small as a point. As mass-energy of the universe must be conserved, all the mass-energy must have been there at time zero as well. We should note that conservation of mass-energy is violated in this case as well. This is equivalent to saying that all the mass-energy was created at time zero. Mass-energy density of the universe was infinity at time equal to zero, which is called a point of singularity."

To get around this obvious difficulty, scientists have introduced an entity called 'inflation', which has mysteriously disappeared from the present universe. The singularity problem does not arise in the Vedic approach to creation. As the author observes: "Inflation has not solved the singularity problem, as inflation only produces part of the mass-energy of the universe, and as long as even a tiny amount of matter-energy was present at time zero, singularity problem will be there. The Vedas tell us that at time zero there was no mass-energy in the universe. It was a complete void. Space, mass and energy are continuously being created. As universe had zero mass-energy at time zero, the universe did not start with singularity."

This obviously violates the conservation principle. But Vedic cosmology has a conservation principle of its own that includes space along with mass and energy. It is a very subtle principle and yet stunning in its simplicity. The author describes it as follows:

"... the Vedas have returned to tell an even greater truth [than mass-energy equivalence]: equivalence of space, mass and energy. Space is no different from matter and energy. In the beginning there was no mass-energy in the universe because there was no space. Mass-energy is created due to expansion of the universe. The universe cannot expand without creating mass-energy and universe cannot contract without annihilating mass-energy. Thus the universe started with zero mass energy and will end up with zero mass-energy as well. Thus there was no singularity in the beginning and there will be no singularity at the end."

The author recognizes that since the universe is now in an expanding mode, we must be witnessing the creation of mass-energy in the universe. As evidence he points to gamma-ray bursts that scientists have observed but have no clue as to its source. In 1973 it was discovered that about three times a day, the sky flashes with a powerful burst of gamma-rays. The author observes: "The gamma-ray bursts are intense, bulk of their radiation is in the range of 100,000 to 1,000,000 electron volts, implying a very hot source and its sources release more energy within minutes than sun will release in its entire lifetime."

Astronomers believe that these bursts are coming from distances that range from three to ten billion light years. Various explanations have been offered-from black holes to collapsing neutron stars-but none is satisfactory. It is possible to account for it using Vedic cosmology. According to Vedic science, mass-energy is continuously being created at the surface of the universe. This is related to the expansion of the universe. In the author's words: "As the universe is huge now, its expansion will create immense radiation."

What is extraordinary is that these gamma-ray bursts-corresponding to the creation of mass-energy according to Vedic science-takes place three times a day. This is exactly the frequency given in the Rigveda in at least three passages. (3.56.6, 7.11.3, 9.86.18). The second of these tells us: "O Agni! We know you have wealth to give three times a day to mortals."

Another fundamental difference between the Big Bang model and the Vedic model is that the latter postulates rotation of the universe around an axis. This means it has a preferred direction, or, in the parlance of physics, the Vedic universe is non-isotropic. Here too the author invokes an unexplained scientific phenomenon

in support-violation of parity observed in weak interactions. As the author observes:

> *"It is obvious that model of the universe should not contradict the nature of these interactions. Weak interaction has complete disregard for many conservation laws including parity... What is so special about weak interaction? Why is it that it does not obey conservation laws like other interactions?... It has been more than forty years since the discovery of parity violation, but cosmologists have not taken into account what particle physicists have proved."*

The author shows that this can be seen as an indirect proof of the rotating universe implied in the Vedic model. He then cites possible direct evidence also. He notes that observations by Borge Norland and John P. Ralston on the polarization of light from distant galaxies indicate that the universe is rotating. (This is on top of the well-known Faraday Effect. Since the rate of rotation is slow, one has to look very far to find physical evidence of it.) Their results are disputed by other scientists for the reason that it violates the idea of an isotropic universe, but that is only to be expected. As the author notes: "Rotation of universe and continuous creation of matter and energy are two salient features of the Vedic cosmology."

This brings us to the author's reconstruction of the Vedic universe, which he summarizes as follows: "Like the Big Bang model, the Vedic model assumes that the universe started from a point and is expanding. However, unlike the Big Bang model, universe starts cold with zero mass-energy, and is rotating as well as expanding. There is a similarity with the Steady State model that mass-energy is constantly being created. The difference is that [in the Vedic] the universe is not considered infinitely old, and the creation of mass-energy is only during the expansion phase of the universe. During the contraction phase, the mass-energy is annihilated, so that the universe ends without a singularity."

Clearly, the author's study of the Vedas combined with his knowledge of modern physics has allowed him to present an impressive synthesis of the two. There are some minor difficulties. His reading of the Vedas leads him to postulate the existence of

particles not known to modern physics. His interpretations of the symbolism of the Harappan seals are speculative, and sometimes wrong. We are of course on much firmer ground today-thanks to Jha's decipherment of the Harappan script, and the subsequent work of Jha and this reviewer.

Also, it is a little puzzling that he should read the famous description of the Sarasvati River-giribhya a samudrat-to mean 'from the ocean', when the causative case (pancami vibhakti) suggests the opposite. The book also has passages on the Puranas and the development of Hinduism that add nothing to it but interrupts the flow of reasoning that is central to its theme. But these are minor quibbles that do not seriously detract from what is beyond doubt a significant achievement.

We are now in the midst of a Renaissance of sorts in the study of ancient India, including the Vedas. More are less coinciding with the collapse of the colonial-missionary creation known as the Aryan invasion model of India, a new school of research-inaccurately called the Indo-American school-has been pursuing a path of study that combines ancient learning and modern science. Freeing itself from the racial, political and religious biases that influenced Indology for more than a century, this new school has made significant contributions to the history of the ancient world. Among notable members of this school one may cite K.D. Sethna, David Frawley, Shrikanth Talageri, Natwar Jha and several others. Dr. Roy, the author of the book under discussion, is a major new entrant to the field. He has opened an important way of looking at ancient texts-and possibly also the universe.

All told Vedic Physics is an impressive tour de force by a young scholar, offering fresh insights into the Vedas without compromising on the science. At the very least, it has opened new avenues for research, which one hopes will be pursued by scientists working closely with traditionally schooled Vedic scholars. This alone holds promise of a sane approach to problems if we hope to avoid the inanities-and the insanities-that have plagued Indology for over a century.

Nineteenth century Bengal witnessed a few reform movements among Muslims as well as Hindus. The Islamic Reform movements, such as Faraizi, Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah, Taaiyuni and AHL-

I-HADITH, occupied a conspicuous position among them. These were revivalist in character and stirred deep religious sentiments among Muslims throughout east, west and north Bengal, and succeeded considerably in rousing the Muslim masses to action. The Tabligh Jamaat and Seerat Conference movements, which recently stirred similar mass enthusiasm in Bangladesh, are reminiscent, and to a great extent also the spiritual progeny, of these movements of the preceding century.

Universal Perspective Religious movements being social phenomena have to be studied in the wider context. Islamic revivalist movements had taken such hold of Bengal in the 19th century that historians rated them as the persistent sign of life in a subjugated and decadent Muslim community. Religious revivalism in itself was not, however, peculiar to the Muslims of Bengal, but had become widespread throughout the Muslim world, affecting the Muslim Ummah as a whole. There is a suggestion that it had cropped up in different parts of the world under the impact of imperialism.

Thus considered, the Wahhabism of Arabia appears to have arisen under the impact of Ottoman imperialism. Mughal and British imperialism produced the movement of Shah Waliullahi and the Teriqah-i-Muhammadiyah. The Fariazi, Taaiyuni and Ahl-i-Hadith movements arose under British imperialism. The Fulani and Sannusiyah of North Africa arose under French and British imperialism, and the Paduri and Muhammadiyah movements of Indonesia under the impact of Dutch imperialism.

In popular parlance these religious reform movements came to be associatively known as Wahhabism and Islamic revivalism, tajdeed al-Islam, as against a somewhat Western Renaissance-oriented Muslim modernism and Pan-Islamism, ittihad al-Islam. The movements, in general, were universal; both aimed at re-awakening Muslims all over the world; and both carried the slogan: 'Islam in danger'. Therefore, there existed considerable mutual sympathy and a good deal of unity of purpose and identity of sentiments between them. Yet, they pursued different goals and occasionally expressed disapproval of each other's programmes and scrupulously maintained exclusiveness and independence of each other's stance.

Local perspective Although Bengal was occupied by the Muslims in the beginning of the 13th century AD and ruled by them till 1757, it was not fully Islamised. It comprised a cosmopolitan society consisting of Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists, who lived side by side in adjacent but separate villages and hamlets under a tolerant regime that ensured universal justice and security. In this local cosmopolitan historical perspective, the social scene in Bengal in the 19th century, as far as reform was concerned, sharply contrasted with the slothful situation obtaining in the 18th century. Intellectual life in Bengal during the 19th century became especially quickened and enlivened by the impulse of socio-religious reform which took hold of both Muslim and Hindu communities. In the second decade of the century, it made an intelligent section of both the communities question the compatibility of the current patterns of their life with their respective religious inspirational sources, and also with the immediate and future prospects of their communities. The immediate cause of such a reawakening was the impact of British rule on Bengal.

The rule of the EAST INDIA COMPANY in Bengal had completely shattered the social frame of the country, firstly, by sapping the authority and status of the Mughal Ruling class which comprised Muslims and Hindus in equal numbers; secondly, by destroying the traditional lifestyle of the rural well-to-do class; and thirdly, by setting up the Hindu Banyans of Calcutta, who were mainly marwari businessmen and moneylenders and worked as Gomastahs (commercial agents of the English in India), often styled as 'black Gomastahs of white men'. The zamindars, feudal lords newly created by the PERMANENT SETTLEMENT of 1793, perpetrated atrocities on the masses. The gomastas and the zamindars were joined by a third group of ambitious fortune hunters, Englishmen looking for opportunities for capital investment in rural Bengal. Many of them probably brought money and skills from the lost colonies of America, and as indigo planters gave a 'royal colour' to the scourging of the peasantry.

The combined impact of these developments upon the social structure of a subjugated people can be well imagined. Such a pattern of a 'protected scourging' thus formed a corresponding

'take-over process' of the East India Company's rule over Bengal (1757-1857) as against the systematic destruction of the Mughal administration, which has been designated by Lathrop Stoddard as the policy of 'pacific penetration' by Western imperialism. This policy had created many social and economic anomalies especially in the rural life of Bengal.

Little wonder, therefore, that it aroused a deep sense of pity in the minds of Christian missionaries, and a sense of remorse in some good souls from the ranks of English administrators, and also considerable sympathy amongst humanist groups in England. With their blessings, encouragement, help and participation, Raja Ram Mohan Roy laid the foundation of a 'Renaissance' type of modernist/Western social reform movement in Calcutta around 1814, which spurred numerous other social reform movements in Bengal and India for remodelling the Hindu social system.

However, if the British challenge had produced a somewhat positive response among the Hindu elite of Bengal, during the corresponding period it produced a negative response among the Muslims and spurred a number of 'revivalist' religious reform movements, beginning with the Faraizi movement of HAJI SHARIATULLAH in Bengal and the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid of Rai Bareilly in Delhi, both of which came into existence about the year 1818 AD.

In contrast to the Muslim revivalist movements, Raja Ram Mohan Roy's reform movement is generally regarded as a Renaissance movement. It should, nevertheless, be observed that it differed from the European 'Renaissance model', especially as it was deeply infused with a revivalist desire to restore a pristine Hindu or Aryan religious spirit.

The European Renaissance aimed at integrating the classical, secular, Graeco-Roman spirit of the 'rationalism' of the 'past' with the merciful Christian 'morality' of the 'present', to create a 'humanism' that could be the foundation of a happy and civilized 'future' world. In comparison, however, Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Renaissance aimed at resuscitating a pristine Aryan 'Unitarianism of God' with the help of the modern Western rationalist spirit. In the heart of hearts, it was not secular but deeply religious. Consequently some other important Hindu reform movements,

such as the Arya Samaj, were antagonistically spurred by Ram Mohan's reformist activities and inspiration.

Islamic revivalism and the Hindu Renaissance thrived within the same space and about the same time. They affected each other, unfortunately more by their mutually antagonistic revivalist impulse, than by the actual or imagined 'rational' impulse of the Renaissance. Thereby they tended to break asunder the time-honoured Islamic or Mughal peace of 'religious tolerance' and began fostering a new form of Hindu-Muslim communalism.

Local Islamic perspective Bengal, from the Muslim conquest (1205) till the Battle of Palashi (1757), continued to be a well-secured stronghold of the world Muslim community. Politically also, it remained a bastion of Muslim power in the Indian subcontinent. But the Battle of PALASHI brought in the English, and as a consequence, Muslim society decayed and shrank under constant stress. The period of subjugation under the British can be subdivided into two periods: first-pure slavery of 100 years under the East India Company's rule and second-protected subjecthood for 90 years under the British Crown, the Great Revolt of 1857 drawing the dividing line between the two.

In the first period, Muslim society moved from light to darkness, from hope to despair, from Darul Islam to Darul Harb, that is, from the abode of peace to the abode of war. Muslims waged a relentless and unlimited war against the enemies of Islam to defeat their conspiracy against Muslim society and the religion of Islam. It was a war unto death-Jihad or Hijrat, which eventually gave birth to the Faraizi movement of Haji Shariatullah and DUDU MIYAN, the Tariqah-i-Muhammadyah movement or so-called Indian Wahhabism of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid, TITU MIR, Maulana Wilayat Ali and Maulana Inayat Ali, the Ahl-i-Hadith movement of Shah Ismail Shahid, and Maulana Nazir Husain and also the Taaiyuni movement of Maulana KARAMAT ALI of Jaunpur.

In the second period, following the great shake-up of 1857, the Muslims-not as a community, but individually-endeavoured to adjust themselves to the alien political power, to tame their nature before adjusting to the modern civilization of the West, to compete along with other subject peoples of the British empire in

order to grab the amenities of a happy and cultured life under Pax Britannica, to exchange jihad for the protection of the British law, Aman. In a word, they tried for a transition from the abode of war (Darul Harb) to an abode of protection (Darul Aman) by means of giving up political ambition and accepting wholeheartedly the administrative peace, the rule of law, as the be-all and end-all of a happy modern life. These ideals and the accompanying sentiments and emotions became crystallised in one word-loyalism.

The Islamic revivalist movements thrived in Bengal with high emotional fervour from about 1820 to 1870, most of the time at a frantic sentimental level until they were systematically destroyed or tamed as non-political, religious movements by the British government. Thus considered, they may be said to form a 'transitional bridge' from the state of slavery to the state of protectorate. Until the struggle fizzled out, the slogan of 'Darul Aman' and the idea of protectorate could not take hold of Muslim society. After the revivalist movements fizzled out the Renaissance type of Muslim modernism, overtly or covertly pronouncing the slogan of 'loyalism', took charge of leading the Muslim community nearer to the English rulers along the road of constitutional progress.

Functions Coming into being as a puritan reaction to the impact of imperialism, as an international jihad movement and as a move to re-organise and reintegrate local Muslim society in the local socio-political perspective discussed above, the first and foremost task before the Islamic revivalist movements of Bengal was to revive the original doctrines of religion.

This was also the main task set before Hindu reform movements such as the Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj. In their reformist endeavour, both the groups called for purging their respective societies, but offered grounds for the fresh community-wide contact between them and their like-minded co-religionists across provincial barriers.

One of the functions of Islamic revivalism was thus the 'breaking of isolation' of the Muslims of different parts of the Indian sub-continent which had been caused by the shrinking of the Mughal power during the preceding century.

Secondly, it may be noted that, in all, there were four Islamic revivalist movements that gained popularity in Bengal. Out of them, the Faraizi, Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah and Ahl-i-Hadith aimed at reviving the pristine teachings of Islam and purging Muslim society of un-Islamic local accretions. The fourth, the Taaiyuni movement led by Maulana Karamat Ali Jaunpuri, had split off from the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah and wanted to retain some traditional institutions of Muslim society such as Fatiha, Milad and Urs, which were rejected by the other three. Moreover, following the revolt of 1857 the Ta'aiyuni movement joined hands with the Muslim modernists and declared India under the British Crown as an 'abode of protection' or protectorate (Darul Aman), which according to Maulana Karamat Ali absolved the Muslims from the religious obligation of jihad, that is, fighting unto death for the liberation of the Muslim community, and from Hijrat, that is, migration to an abode of Islam. Moreover, the reformist trend of Shah Waliullah of Delhi had influenced the Ahl-i-Hadith movement.

The Faraizi movement arose under the direct influence of the Wahhabism of Arabia and had no direct link with the movement of Shah Waliullah or the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah of Delhi. On the other hand, the movement of Titu Mir was a direct extension of the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah of Delhi.

Being manifestations of a universal type of Islamic revivalism, these reform movements emphasized the social egalitarianism of Islam, equality of mankind as the creation of one Allah, brotherhood of Muslims, the unity of the Muslim world and the need for waging jihad for the liberation of Muslim lands from the hands of the infidels. For this purpose, the upholders of these movements also sought to resuscitate the Islamic Ummah, which became in course of time a central part of their reform programme. For this reason, the Islamic revivalist movements everywhere in the world, overtly or covertly, aimed at establishing an Islamic social order and political State, and as a matter of policy, turned directly to the masses.

A second important function of Islamic revivalism was, thus, reinfusing a deep sense of organic unity of the Ummah and of the value of Islamic egalitarianism and brotherhood in the

consciousness of the Muslims. Moreover, their strategy of mass contact and fiery speeches delivered with equal fervour from the pulpit and the political platform, for rousing religious sentiments against internal corruption of Muslim society as well as against the conspiracy of the foreign rulers, succeeded considerably in waking up mass consciousness to the deplorable political and economic situation of the Muslims all over the world.

A third important function of Islamic revivalism in Bengal was thus the widening of general awareness, psychological re-invigoration, and reform and re-organisation of society. In the early 1820s when Sayyid Ahmad Shahid visited the city of Calcutta, he apparently received no opposition from any quarters of the Muslims, Hindus or the government administration. But in the first flush of its mass popularity in rural Bengal, in parts of 24 Parganas and Nadia under Mir Nisar Ali alias Titu Mir from about 1827 to 1831, it came upon the quicksands of a conspiracy of the new class of Hindu zamindars and gomastahs with whom the European indigo planters also joined hands.

However, Haji Shariatullah had lived at Mecca from 1799 to 1818. While he was a student he had closely observed the conflict of the Wahhabis of Arabia with Ottoman imperial power and watched how they were destroyed by Khedive Mohammad Ali at the behest of the Ottoman sultan. The Haji took shelter in patience and sobriety, and saved his movement by retreating completely from politics into the arena of social and religious reform. [Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan]

Time to Rekindle Passion for Unity

In India, many civilisations have come together over the years, creating new patterns of universal oneness. Raja Ram Mohan Roy ushered in the age of new thought in 1828. He wrote: "All mankind is one great family of which numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches".

In Bengal, Rabindranath Tagore's father passed on these thoughts to the poet who wrote: "I love India not because I have had the chance to be born on her soil, but because she has saved through tumultuous ages the living words that were issued from the illuminated consciousness of her sons".

All religions tell us that the divine is within us. The Gospel according to St. Thomas says: "He who has heard and assimilated my word is as I". In Sanatana Dharma it is Tat Tvam Asi. To find divinity within oneself it is important to act with compassion towards all beings.

Mexican poet Octavia Paz wrote: "In India there is a passion for unity". Maulana Azad once asked: "If religion expresses the universal truth, why should conflicts arise amongst different beliefs, each claiming to be the sole repository of truth, and condemning others as false?"

One reaches the infinite through love, not through violence. "Ahimsa hi param dharma, Sarva dharma samabhava". The trishul of Shiva represents the three dimensions of space, earth and sky and the three gunas that each of us must strive to overcome in our own lives.

Guru Vyasa spoke of the folly of men who choose the way to destruction through discord when all legitimate material satisfaction could be had through the way of fellowship and harmony. Ours is a multifarious heritage. On the Sindhu-Gangetic plains the tribes were known as Sindhus and Hindus. Hindu became Indus to the Greeks and the country on the bank of the Indus became India. There was no caste, no temple, only prayers in the oral tradition of the Rig Veda.

Caste became an ugly name much later. Yet, Rishi Parasar (the law giver) was the son of a Chandala, Rishi Vashishta's mother was a fisherwoman, Viswamitra was a Kshatriya, Valmiki a hunter. All became great gurus. In the oral verse of the Rig Veda, men and women were equal.

Sanatana Dharma was meant to be India's gift to the world, a way to realise peace and harmony. Increasingly, however, ancient customs are being taken out of context for political purposes. Cattle were extremely important for the Vedic people and so became symbols of spiritual experience. Go, the name for cow and bull, also connotes the earth and the speech of rishis. Gokula means temple; it also means Krishna's dwelling place.

Today, politicians fight over cow protection. Why protect only the cow? What about the beautiful birds of the sky? And the

donkeys and the street dogs that are constantly being ill-treated? The environment, too, needs protection. Majestic trees are regularly being chopped down. This decreases forest cover and causes more pollution. So the list is long and painful.

Ecological awareness is the intuitive awareness of the oneness of all life. Our ancient heritage advocates protection not only for human beings and animals but for the elements, too.

Listen to the words of the Atharva Veda, written 4,000 years ago: "We are birds of the same nest,/We may wear different skins,/We may speak different languages,/We may believe in different religions,/We may belong to different cultures,/Yet we share the same home-Our Earth./For man can live individually,/ But can survive only collectively/Born on the same planet/Covered by the same skies/Gazing at the same stars/Breathing the same air/We must learn to happily progress together/Or miserably perish together".

Brahman is worshipped as the sole creator and supporter of the universe. This monotheism is based on the interpretation of the early Vedanta, the Upanishads, and the Brahma Sutra. Ram Mohan Roy, founder of Brahmo Samaj, identified the monotheism of Christianity and Islam as of universal validity. Codification of the doctrines came with the main principles of the Nava Samhita, New Dispensation, of Keshub Chandra Sen, the third leader of the movement, in 1881. These are: 1) Harmony of all scriptures, saints, and sects. 2) Harmony of reason and faith, of devotion and duty, of yoga and bhakti. 3) The church of the Samaj stands for One Supreme God, to be worshipped without form. No idolatry in any form may enter the precincts of the church. 4) The church stands for universal brotherhood without distinction of caste or creed or sect. One might add to this the principle of Roy that religious authority should be based on reason and ability, not on priestly caste. Texts from all world religions are used for prayer and worship.

Ram Mohan Roy was born in 1774 to a Brahmin family in the Bengal village of Radhanagar. He was influenced in his youth by studies in Advaita and the monotheism of Islam, and later by the Unitarian movement. The superior kulina castes stood aloof from the British. Roy however was the son of a non-kulina Brahmin

and the non-kulina Hindus reaped the benefit of working with the British. By 1815 Roy was a financial success and went to live in Calcutta to devote himself to social, moral, and religious reform.

The non-kulina Hindus were being urged by Christian missionaries to convert. To keep their Hindu identity and to acquire Western culture as well as to improve their religious status-for their religious leadership came from the kulinas-a new form of Hinduism was needed. Ram Mohan Roy provided this by the creation of the Brahmo Samaj in 1828 and he became the religious leader. He was followed by other non-kulinas and this new type of religious leader also led other new religious movements in the nineteenth century.

Thus started the first modern Hindu reform movement. Roy sought to reform Hinduism from within, to restore Hinduism to its primitive purity. He started the restoration of the Vedas to public awareness for both study and religious inspiration, and he regenerated the Vedantic tradition, still of importance to educated Hindus today. Roy worked tirelessly to better social, moral, and religious conditions, one of his great successes being his contribution to the abolition of suttee in 1829.

Under the successors of Roy, Debendranath Tagore (1817-1905) and Keshub Chandra Sen (1838-1884), the work of Roy continued and the Samaj developed into a vital movement for social and religious reform. Swami Vivekananda as a young man was involved in the most westernising, reformist faction of the Brahmo Samaj. Gandhi too was a beneficiary of the vision of Roy.

The Samaj contributed to the process of making the Vedas "the active basis of numerous ideologies for socio-religious change. In this way they played an important part in the creation of modern India..." (Lipner 1994, 66).

Symbols

Keshub gave concreteness to the otherwise abstract monotheism of the Samaj by introducing into the church the Pilgrimage to saints, the Homa ceremony, the Baptismal ceremony, the Lord's supper, the Flag ceremony, the Arati, the vow of Poverty, the Savitri Vrata, the Nightingale Vrata, and other innovations. He also introduced extempore prayers and speeches from the

pulpit rather than fixed stereotyped liturgy. However, Keshub himself became a symbol as a master and avatar.

Adherents

The Brahmo Samaj survives as a relatively small but progressive sect mainly in West Bengal. The Tagore family supported the Samaj for three generations.

Hinduism

Hinduism, dating from around 1500 B. C., is the oldest living religion having a membership (1982) of 477,991,300 confined largely to India. It is the most complex, diverse, and tolerant of the world's religions. One can find within Hinduism almost any form of religion--from simple animism to elaborate philosophical systems--which has ever been conceived or practiced by mankind. Hinduism has met the challenge of other religions, primarily, by absorbing them and their practices and beliefs into the mainstream of Hindu religious expression.

The Aryans (noble ones) invaded the Indus valley from Persia in the second millennium B.C. They were basically wandering nomads who spoke an Indo-European language which became the basis for Sanskrit. This early Aryan society developed into three basic socio-economic classes. The priests or Brahmins became the ruling class. The tribal chieftains and their warriors or Kshatriyas were next in line, with the commoners and merchants or Vaishyas rounding out the Aryan society. A fourth group, the conquered pre-Aryan people or Shudras, were at the bottom of society. Eventually these divisions developed into a religiously supported caste system.

The Vedas are the sacred scriptures of Hinduism. The four basic Vedic books are the Rig-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, the Sama-Veda, and the Atharva-Veda. Each of the Vedic books is divided into four parts. Each contains a section of hymns to the gods (Mantras), a section of ritual materials (Brahmanas), a section of guidance for hermits (Aranyakas), and a fourth section of philosophical treatises (Upanishads). The Mantra and Brahmana sections are the oldest materials with the Aranyakas and Upanishads added later. This Vedic literature evolved during the

classical period of Hinduism. The fourteen principal Upanishads form the basis of Hindu philosophy. They assume there is one reality, the impersonal god-being called Brahman. All things and beings are an expression of Brahman. Everything in the world and experience which is not Brahman is illusion (maya). All phenomenal existence (pleasure, worldly success, wealth) is illusion arising from ignorance of the true nature of reality. Those who continue in this ignorance are bound to life by the law of karma which keeps them endlessly in the cycle of birth, life, death, and rebirth. When man discovers the Path of Desire is not fulfilling he is ready to start on the Path of Renunciation. Here he recognizes his duty to others, family and community, and dedicates himself to a life of service. This is rewarding but he still yearns for infinite being, infinite awareness, and infinite joy.

To achieve these ultimates of experience we must realize the basic purpose of life is to pass beyond imperfection. That which is beyond the limitations and imperfections of life can be found within. Underlying our physical existence and personality is an infinite reservoir of reality. This infinite centre of every life, this hidden authentic self or Atman is no less than Brahman, the Godhead. By detachment from the finite, illusory self and commitment to Atman-Brahman, we achieve infinite being, infinite awareness, and infinite joy.

This philosophy of the Upanishads is a reaction to the sacrificial, priestly form of worship in Hinduism. It emphasizes meditation as a means of worship and teaches that ignorance is man's basic plight. Historically, the priestly sections of the Vedas have directed the religion of the masses in India while the Upanishads have attracted a relatively small number of Indian intellectuals. Contemporary Western people who are attracted to Eastern thought tend to identify Hinduism with the philosophy of the Upanishads.

Classical Hinduism also produced the ethical Code of Manu which teaches that the caste system is divinely ordained. The first three castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas) are "twice born" people while the Shudras are "once born" manual labourers. The only upward mobility through this caste system is by means of repeated incarnations. Although the caste system is outlawed in

contemporary India, its social influence is still strong. The Code of Manu also teaches the various stages through which a man is expected to pass in a successful life: student, householder, hermit, and wandering beggar. These stages are only for twice born men. Women should stay in the home under the protection and control of the chief male in the household. The code requires the cultivation of pleasantness, patience, control of mind, non-stealing, purity, control of senses., intelligence, knowledge, truthfulness, and non irritability. The killing of cows is listed among the greatest of sins.

The composition of the great epic poem, the Bhagavad-Gita, sometime between the second century B.C. and the third century A.D. marks the end of the period of classical Hinduism. The Bhagavad-Gita is found within the text of a much longer poem and is probably the most highly esteemed scripture of Hinduism. In the poem Arjuna, a Hindu knight, for the first time in the recorded history of Hinduism, raises the question of the propriety of killing people. He is answered by his charioteer, Krishna, who turns out to be an incarnation of the god Vishnu. Arjuna is told he must be loyal to his duty as a warrior and kill. The Gita also teaches a variety of means of personal salvation. One may achieve release from life (Nirvana) through asceticism, through meditation, through devotion to and worship of the gods, or through obedience to the rules of his caste,

After the close of the classical period subtle changes gradually appear in Hinduism. Out of the millions of major and minor gods, worship tended to centre around the Trimurti: Brahma, the creator; Shiva, the destroyer; and Vishnu, the preserver. Among this trinity, Brahma receives the least attention. Shiva is the most popular probably because he is the god of sex and reproduction and appeals to the deprivation experienced by the masses. His various goddess consorts such as Kali are equally revered. According to mythology, Vishnu has appeared on earth in nine forms and will come a tenth time to bring the world to an end. Among his appearances are Krishna; Gautama, the Buddha; Matsya, the fish who saved Manu from the great flood; and Christ.

The majority of the people of India seek salvation through devotion to the gods while many of the wealthy and educated seek salvation through the way of knowledge. This intellectual

Hinduism centres around six systems of philosophy: Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, Vedanta, Vaiseshika, and Nyana. All claim to be based on the Vedas and revolve about common themes. The only basic difference among them is their view of ultimate reality. The Vedanta system is monistic and asserts that the only essence in the universe is Brahman; all else is illusion. The Samkhya, Yoga, Vaiseshika, and Nyana systems are dualistic and assert that the universe is composed of two forces, matter and spirit.

The Mimamsa system is basically atheistic and teaches that salvation comes through the correct observance of Vedic rituals. Jainism and Buddhism began as reform movements in Hinduism and it has absorbed much of their thinking.

During the Middle Ages Hinduism and Islam competed for followers in India. The two religions are in many ways opposites and there has been much bloodshed in their struggles. Sikhism arose in an attempt to bring reconciliation between the two. Tradition credits the disciple Thomas for bringing Christianity to India. During the three centuries of British rule Christianity had considerable influence on the growing edge of Hinduism.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought three main reform movements in Hinduism. Ram Mohan Roy, called the Father of Modern India, was a monotheist who tended to agree with Christian missionaries in their attempt to suppress the suttee, child marriage, polytheism, and idolatry in Hinduism. The greatest reformer was Sri Ramakrishna, a follower of non dualistic Vedanta, who believed there was one single reality, God, behind all religions and that truth is essentially one. His disciple, Dutt, later known as Vivekananda, became the first Hindu missionary to the modern world.

He described Vedanta Hinduism as the mother of all other religions. The best known Indian reformer is Mohandas K. Gandhi who was influenced by the teachings of Jesus and the Jain doctrine of non injury (ahimsa) espoused civil disobedience and nonviolence which were largely responsible for bringing India freedom from British rule. Gandhi, in turn, became a major influence in the political thinking of Martin Luther King, Jr. and many of the leaders of the "peace movement" in Western Civilization.

The Hindu Reformation

"...Thus it may be said that as early as 1820 India had come into the direct current of European thought and had begun to participate in the fruits of Europe's intellectual quest. The Brahmo Samaj lived up to this ideal. Its social message was Westernization, to purge Hinduism of the customs and superstitions with which it was overlaid, to raise the status of women, to bridge the yawning gulf between popular and higher Hinduism, to fight relentlessly against caste, social taboo, polygamy and other well entrenched abuses. To the educated Hindu, who felt unsettled in mind by the attack of the missionaries, the Brahmo Samaj provided the way out.

The Brahmo tradition has become so much a part of the Indian way of life now, that one is inclined to overlook its distinctive contribution. It does not lie primarily in the fact that it enabled Hinduism to withstand the onslaught of the missionaries, but in that it introduced the modern approach to Indian problems..."

The Hindu Reformation of the nineteenth century is one of the great movements of the age which by its massiveness and far-reaching significance takes its place with the most vital developments of modern history.

As it was a slow process and took place under the cover of British authority and was not always obvious to the outsider, it has so far escaped attention. A further reason why, in spite of its tremendous import, it passed unnoticed is that, by its very nature, it was an internal movement which did not touch or influence outside events. But India's independence and emergence into the modern world would hardly have been possible without the slow but radical adjustments that had taken place within the fold of Hinduism for a period of over 100 years.

In order to appreciate this movement fully it is necessary to understand what the position of Hinduism was in the beginning of the nineteenth century. 700 years of Islamic authority over the Indo-Gangetic Plains from Delhi to Calcutta had left Hinduism in a state of depression. It was the religion of a subject race, looked down on with contempt by the Muslims as idolatry. It enjoyed no prestige and for many centuries its practice had been tolerated

only under considerable disadvantage in various areas. It had no central direction, no organization and hardly any leadership. When the British took over the rulership of Northern India, Hinduism for the first time in 700 years stood on a plane of equality with Islam. But a new and even more dangerous portent appeared on the stage.

The missionaries, feeling that there was almost a virgin field here in a society which appeared to be on the point of dissolution, took up the work of conversion. Islam, though it proselytized by fits and starts, had no separate machinery for carrying its message to the people. The Christian missionaries were different. They used no physical force, which Islam did not hesitate to do at intervals and in limited areas. But they came armed with propaganda....

The first result of the Christian attack on Hinduism was a movement among educated Hindus in favour of a social reform of religion. The leader of this was Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833), who may be called the father of the Hindu Reformation.

Born in a Brahmin family, Ram Mohan was brought up as a strict Hindu, but educated, as all Hindus who hoped to enter public service had perforce to be at that time, in Islamic culture. He was a deep student of Arabic and Persian when he entered the East India Company's service, where also he rose to some distinction. During this period he took to the study of English, which opened to him the whole range of Western liberal thought.

It was the time when the mellowed glow of the Great European Enlightenment had cast on European intellectual life an amazing serenity and sense of certainty. The light of D'Holbach, Condorcet, Diderot and the great Encyclopaedists had not died down and the dawn of the great nineteenth century thinkers, especially Bentham and the Utilitarians in England, which was destined to have so powerful an influence in the development of ideas in India, had not begun.

What Ram Mohan witnessed around him in India was a scene of utter devastation and ruin. The old order of Muslim rule had disappeared overnight, leaving behind it utter chaos in every walk of life. Hinduism in Bengal, once the centre of a devotional

Vaishnava religion of great vitality, had sunk to a very low level of superstition, extravagance and immorality. A seeker after truth, Ram Mohan turned to the new religion which the missionaries were preaching. He studied Hebrew and Greek to understand Christianity better. But his scholarship was taking him at the same time to the well of European liberalism. Ram Mohan Roy was in fact the last of the Encyclopaedists. Thus he came to reject Christ, while accepting the wide humanism of European thought, its ethics and its general approach to the problems of life.

His book, The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness, is an interpretation of Christianity in this new light, a reply to the missionaries rather than a call to Indians.

While Ram Mohan Roy thus rejected the Christian claims, he realized that Hinduism had to be re-interpreted. That interpretation he attempted in the Brahmo Samaj, a new reformed sect of Hinduism, which he founded. The Samaj was not in its essence a Christian dilution of Hinduism, as has often been said, but a synthesis of the doctrines of the European Enlightenment, with the philosophical views of the Upanishads. As a religion Brahmo Samaj was based firmly on the Vedanta of genuine Hindu tradition, but its outlook on life was neither Christian nor Hindu, but European, and derived its inspiration from the intellectual movements of the eighteenth century.

Thus it may be said that as early as 1820 India had come into the direct current of European thought and had begun to participate in the fruits of Europe's intellectual quest. The Brahmo Samaj lived up to this ideal. Its social message was Westernization, to purge Hinduism of the customs and superstitions with which it was overlaid, to raise the status of women, to bridge the yawning gulf between popular and higher Hinduism, to fight relentlessly against caste, social taboo, polygamy and other well entrenched abuses. To the educated Hindu, who felt unsettled in mind by the attack of the missionaries, the Brahmo Samaj provided the way out.

The Brahmo tradition has become so much a part of the Indian way of life now, that one is inclined to overlook its distinctive contribution. It does not lie primarily in the fact that it enabled Hinduism to withstand the onslaught of the missionaries, but in

that it introduced the modern approach to Indian problems. India started on her long adventure in building up a new civilization as a synthesis between the East and the West in the 1820s, and in that sense Ram Mohan is the forerunner of new India. It has been well stated that 'he embodies the new spirit, its freedom of inquiry, its thirst for science, its large human sympathy, its pure and sifted ethics along with its reverent but not uncritical regard for the past and prudent disinclination towards revolt.'

Macaulay, English Education & Christian Missionaries...

The spirit of reform was entering Hinduism from other sources also. In 1835 the Government of India declared that 'the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India', and embarked on a policy of Western education...

It was the devout hope of Macaulay, who was the champion of the scheme, and of many others, that the diffusion of the new learning among the higher classes would see the dissolution of Hinduism and the widespread acceptance of Christianity.

The missionaries were also of the same view, and; they entered the educational field with enthusiasm, providing schools and colleges in many parts of India, where education in the Christian Bible was compulsory for Hindu students. The middle classes accepted Western education with avidity and willingly studied Christian scriptures, but neither the dissolution of Hindu society so hopefully predicted nor the conversion of the intellectuals so devoutedly hoped for showed any signs of materialisation.

On the other hand, Hinduism assimilated the new learning, and the effects were soon visible all over India in a revival of a universalized religion based on the Vedanta.

It is necessary to remember that, though the Hindu religion has innumerable cults and sects, the philosophic background of all of them-including Buddhism-is the Vedanta. The doctrine of the Vedanta is contained in three authoritative texts-which are not scriptures-the Brahma Sutras, the Upanishads and the Gita.

Every orthodox sect in India derives its authority directly from these and, as has been stated in the previous chapter, the protagonists of each new religious sect have had to demonstrate

how their own teachings flowed directly from these three sources. Thus it was, that Sankara, the reformer of Hinduism in the eighth century, had to write his commentary on all the three. It is to the doctrines of the Vedanta, as embodied in the Upanishads, that Ram Mohan Roy turned when he also felt the need of a new religious interpretation.

Arya Samaj, Dayananda Saraswati...

The demand of new India was not for a new sect. It was for a universal religion acceptable to all Hindus. The first effort to provide such a basis was by Dayananda Saraswati who saw in the Vedas the revealed Word of God and felt that, as the Vedas were accepted by all who claimed to be Hindus, a religion based on the Vedas should have universal appeal in India.

The Muslims had a revealed book, the Holy Quran. The Christians had the Bible, and Swami Dayananda felt that the amorphous and indefinable nature of Hinduism, which exposed it to so much weakness, could be remedied by providing the Hindus also with a revealed book. This seemed all the more the right path since the Vedas gave no authority to the usages and superstitions that had come to be accepted by the masses as Hinduism.

There was no sanction in the Vedas for caste, for the prohibition of the marriage of widows, for untouchability, for the taboo on food and the other characteristics of popular Hinduism which had been seized upon by the missionaries in their campaign and were being widely rejected by Hindu intelligentsia.

Swami Dayananda in his Satyartha Praksah, or the Light of True Meaning, made a brave and ingenious attempt to see in the Vedas all that the Christians and the Muslims were claiming to be the basis of their religions, universal brotherhood and a direct and non-metaphysical approach to God.

His Arya Samaj, however successful as a militant organization for the protection of Hinduism from the onslaughts of Islam and Christianity, never appealed to the Hindus outside the Punjab. The reasons were simple.

The attempt to go back to the Vedas involved a denial of the Hindu culture of the last three thousand years, a refusal to see

any good in the puranic religion, in the variegated traditions which had enriched Hindu thought in the Middle Ages, all of which the Arya Samajists rejected without hesitation and attacked without reservation.

Secondly, the Vedic religion had long ago ceased to be related to the religious experience of Hindus. The Gita had poured scorn on Vedic sacrifices and held up the Veda-vadaratas (those who delight to argue on the basis of the Vedas) to contempt. The exclusiveness of the Arya Samaj, amounting to the intolerance of other religious practices though but a reflection of its prolonged fight against the proselytizing faiths and therefore essentially defensive, was also against the tradition of Hinduism which held firmly to the doctrine that the Gita preached, 'men worship Me in different ways, I give them the fruits appropriate to their worship'.

The Hindu does not deny the truth of any religion, or reject the validity of another's religious experience.

But the Arya Samajists, at least in their polemical days, were rigidly exclusive. The movement, therefore, did not spread to other parts of India and its influence was limited mainly to the Delhi and Punjab areas.

Theosophical Society, Annie Besant...

The urge of educated Hindus to find a common denominator for their various sects, which neither of these movements provided, was for a time fulfilled by the activities of the Theosophical Society, of which Colonel Olcott, the American, and Madame Blavatsky, the Russian, were the founders. Educated Hindus all over the country turned to the Theosophical Society, which introduced into India the organization and propagandist methods of European religious activity. Its interpretation of Hinduism followed the more orthodox lines, and many of its Indian leaders, like Dr. Bhagwan Das, of Benares, and Sir S. Subramania Aiyar, of Madras, were also leaders of Hindu Orthodoxy. Its social doctrines, however, were progressive and more important, and it cut through the sectarian lines of Indian religious organization.

Theosophic Hinduism was an All-India movement and it profoundly affected the outlook of the new generation. When

Mrs. Annie Besant, an extremely gifted, persuasive and dynamic personality, became the President of the Society, its propaganda for a reformed universal Hinduism became more marked and was carried on incessantly through schools, colleges and an enormous output of popular literature. Mrs. Besant.had become steeped in Indian culture and her popular approach was Vedantic, as her translation of the Gita would testify.

Swami Vivekananda...

The Vedantic reformation which was thus in the air found its most widely accepted exponent in Swami Vivekananda. Vivekananda was a Western-educated Bengali who came under the influence of Ramakrishna, a mystic whose personality had made a deep impression on the Bengali society of his day. Vivekananda was fired by a desire to revive Hinduism and purify its religious and social teachings. Initiated a Sanyasi, he toured the length and breadth of India spreading the gospel of Vedanta. A prolonged visit to America and a tour in England inflamed his patriotism, his desire to rejuvenate Hindu society and to give Hinduism a social purpose. His fervent declaration that he did not 'believe in a religion that does not wipe out the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth' expresses clearly the changed temper of Hinduism. His own mission he described as follows. Answering the question: 'What do you consider to be the function of your movement as regards India?' the Swami said: 'To find the common bases of Hinduism and to awaken the national consciousness to them.' That common basis he found in the Vedanta which he interpreted in popular phraseology and preached untiringly all over India.

'All the philosophers of India who are orthodox have to acknowledge the authority of the Vedanta and all our present-day religions, however crude some of them may appear to be, however inexplicable some of their purposes may seem, one who understands them and studies them can trace them back to the ideas of the Upanishads. So deeply have these Upanishads sunk into our race that those of you who study the symbology of the crudest religion of the Hindus will be astonished to find sometimes figurative expressions of the Upanishads. Great spiritual and philosophical ideas in the Upanishads are today with us, converted

into household worship in the form of symbols. Thus the various symbols now used by us, all come from the Vedanta, because in the Vedanta they are used as figures.'

Again: 'Thus the Vedanta, whether we know it or not, has, penetrated all the sects in India and what we call Hinduism, that mighty banyan tree, with its immense and almost infinite rami fications, has been throughout interpenetrated by the influence J the Vedanta. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we think that Vedanta, we live in the Vedanta, we breathe the Vedanta and we die in the Vedanta, and every Hindu does that.'

He not only preached this gospel, but trained up a body of missionaries, men of education, pure life and religious zeal to carry this message to the villages.

There were innumerable other Sanyasis and learned men who, though belonging to no particular sect, were preaching the same principles all over India. In fact, the revival of Vedanta in Hindu thought at the end of the nineteenth century constitutes a religious movement of national significance. It was at the end of this period that Aurobindo gave what may be called the classic exposition of the entire Vedanta doctrine in his Essays on the Gita and later his Life Divine. By this, Vedanta may be said to have been restored to its place as the common background of all Hindu religious thought.

Vedanta, Popular Hinduism and the Law...

The unifying doctrine was the Vedanta, but the abstract conceptions of this philosophical approach could only appeal to the elite. Popular Hinduism continued in the old way, sectarian, devotional and based on daily rituals. But it also underwent extraordinary changes. The gnarled branches of this ancient tree either fell away by themselves or were chopped off by legislative action promoted by the reformers. Child marriage, which many Hindu communities considered as an essential part of their religion, was abolished by law through the insistence of popular agitation. The remarriage of widows was permitted.

Social disabilities based on caste vanished by themselves, and the occupational basis of caste communities was weakened. Temples were thrown open to the untouchables, and in the most

orthodox province of Madras, Hindu religious endowments were placed under the control of public bodies. The movement for the regeneration of the depressed classes assumed a national character, and their participation in social and political life became a major factor in the last days of British rule.

Popular Hinduism had a more vigorous life than it ever had in the immediately preceding times, but it had in the course of a hundred years changed its character and temper, though it had kept much of its form.

The major difficulty of Hinduism which had made it a wild jungle growth of widely varying customs, usages and superstitions was its lack of a machinery of reform and unification. The institutions of Hinduism, which in a large measure got identified with 'the religion itself, were the results of certain historical factors. They were upheld by law and not by religion. Vivekananda put the point well when he wrote:

> *'Beginning from Buddha down to Ram Mohan Roy, everyone made the mistake of holding caste to be a religious institution.... But in spite of all the ravings of the priests, caste is simply a crystallized social institution, which after doing its service is now filling the atmosphere of India with stench.'*

The caste organization, the joint family, the rights of inheritance and the relationships arising out of them, which in the main are the special features of Hindu society, are legal and not religious. They are man-made institutions which do not claim Divine origin or religious sanction, and are upheld by man-made laws and not by any church or priesthood. It is a truism to say that legislation of today meets the social needs of yesterday and, unavoidably, law, as a conservative force, lags one step behind social necessities.

When the great codes of Hindu Law were evolved, no doubt they represented the social forces of the time, but soon they had become antiquated. The succession of authoritative commentaries would show that the urge for modifications was widely felt and, in the absence of a legislative authority, the method of a progressive interpretation in each succeeding generation was the only one available to Hindu thinkers. The immutability of Hindu law and customs was never a principle with the authors of the great codes

or their commentators. In fact, the monumental volumes of Dr. Kane's History of Dharma Sastra would demonstrate clearly that in every age social thinkers tried to adjust Hindu institutions to the requirements of the time.

If the laws are changeable it follows that the institutions which were based on such laws are equally changeable. The great weakness of Hindu society was not that the laws had remained immutable but that the changes introduced had been spasmodic, local and dependent to a large extent on the ingenuity of individual commentators. They were not in any sense a continuous renovation of legal principles, nor a legislative approximation to changing conditions.

The reason for this lack of direction of social ideas and the failure to prevent the growth of anti-social customs was undoubtedly the loss of political power. Not only was India as a whole never under a single sovereign authority, but even the political unity of North India which existed with occasional breaks from the time of the Mauryas (320 B.C.) to that of Harsha (A.D, 637) was broken up by the political conditions of the eighth century and lost for a period of 700 years with the Muslim invasion of the twelfth century. As a result, the Hindu community continued to be governed by institutions moulded by laws which were codified over 2,000 years ago and which were out of date even when they were codified.

The Muslim State had no legislative machinery, and when for the first time India was united under the British and the entire Hindu community lived under a common administration, the authorities of the East India Company after a first effort at social reform withdrew, under the pretext of religious neutrality, from activities which they thought might cause popular upheaval. Perhaps it was a wise step, as the motive force of large-scale social reforms must come from the people themselves and legislation can only give statutory sanction to principles which have already gained wide acceptance. The reformation of the Hindu religion was therefore an essential prerequisite of social legislation.

It was only after the Great War that the legislating State came into existence in India. Under the scheme of partial self-government introduced in 1921, there was established a central legislative

authority with a majority of non-official elected Indians, which; was both competent to change the laws of Hindu society and to enforce obedience to such laws through the length and breadth of India. In the provinces the direction of government passed in a large measure to elected legislatures.

The legislative achievements of the Central and Provincial Governments in the field of social reform have been fundamental, though they did not go anywhere as far as the public demanded. The Civil Marriage Act and the Age of Consent Act (raising the marriageable age of girls to I4) were among the more important pieces of legislation which the Central Indian Legislative Assembly enacted.

The Civil Marriage Act validates marriages between men and women of different castes of Hinduism. It strikes at the very root of the orthodox Brahminical conception of caste, and annuls the laws of Manu and the other orthodox codes of Hinduism.

'The immutable law', prohibiting Varna-Samkara or the mixture of castes, ceased by this single piece of legislation to operate through the length and breadth of India.

The Age of Consent Act was equally revolutionary. It was the custom for over two thousand years at least for large sections of people to have girls married before the age of puberty. There was not only long tradition behind the custom, but it was considered compulsory at least for Brahmins in the light of certain authoritative texts. The Indian legislature made this custom illegal, though it had so much religious authority behind it, and the performance of such marriages became a penal offence.

Thus by the end of the third decade, the Hindu reformation had made enough progress to enable the new society to direct its social forces towards general betterment.

The reformation of Hinduism has been treated in some detail, because without an appreciation of its consequences the effects of Western education on Indian society will not be fully clear.

All religions, including Hinduism, have sects. A brief survey of Sects (past and present) in other religions produced the following results:

(Religions listed in alphabetical order)

Some Buddhist sects: Mahayana, Hinayana, Vajrayana, or the Diamond Vehicle, the Theravada School. By the time of King Ashoka the Great, there were eighteen or twenty different cults of Buddhism.

Some Christian Sects: Christian Science, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Rasfatarianism, Unification Church, Protestant Church, Roman Catholic Church, Seventh Day Adventists, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Orthodox, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Universal Church from Brazil, Awakening Churches, etc.

Islamic sects: Ahmadia, Ismail, Salafi, Shia, Sufi, Sunni, Nizari Isma'ilis, Wahhabism, The Submitters, Nation of Islam etc.

Some sects in Judaism: Conservative, Hasidic, Humanistic, Karaite, Orthodox, Reconstructionist, Reform, Sephardic, Traditional, Essenes, Sadducees, Pharisees, Temple Israel, Zealots etc.

Some Shinto Sects: Tenrikyo, Konkokyo, Kurozumikyo, Shinto Taikyo, Fuso-kyo (which included Omoto-kyo), Izumo-oyashiro-kyo, Jikko-kyo, Misogi-kyo, Shinshu-kyo, Shinto-shuseiha, Shinri-kyo, Shinto Taisei-kyo, Ontake-kyo. etc

Some sects in Taoism: The Heavenly (or Celestial) Masters sect, The Supreme Peace sect, The Mao-shan (Mount Mao) sect, The Ling-pao (Marvellous Treasure) sect, The Ch'uan-chen (Completely Real) sect.

Hinduism is extremely catholic, liberal, tolerant, and elastic. This is the wonderful feature of Hinduism. A foreigner (visiting India) is struck with astonishment when he hears about the diverse sects and creeds of Hinduism. But these varieties are really an ornament to Hinduism. They are certainly not its defects.

There are various types of minds and temperaments. So there should be various faiths also. This is but natural. This is the cardinal tenet of Hinduism. There is room in Hinduism for all types of souls-from the highest to the lowest-for their growth and evolution.

The term 'Hinduism' is most elastic. It includes a number of sects and cults, allied, but different in many important points. Hinduism has, within its fold, various schools of Vedanta; Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, etc. It has various cults and

creeds. Hinduism accommodates all types of men. It prescribes spiritual food for everybody, according to his qualification and growth. This is the beauty of this magnanimous religion.

This is the glory of Hinduism. Hence there is no conflict among the various cults and creeds. The Rig-Veda declares: "Truth is one; sages call it various names-Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti." The Upanishads declare that all the paths lead to the same goal, just as cows of variegated colours yield the same white milk. Lord Krishna says in the Gita: 'Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine." All diversities are organized and united in the body of Hinduism.

Hinduism provides food for reflection for the different types of thinkers and philosophers all over the world. All sorts of philosophy are necessary. What appeals to one may not appeal to another, and what is easy for one may be difficult for another. Hence the need for different standpoints. All philosophies of Hinduism are points of view. They are true in their own way. They take the aspirant step by step, stage by stage, till he reaches the acme or the pinnacle of spiritual glory. Sanatana-Dharmists, Arya-Samajists, Deva-Samajists, Jainas, Buddhists, Sikhs and Brahmo-Samajists are all Hindus only, for they rose from Hinduism, and emphasized one or more of its aspects.

The Hindus are divided into three great classes, *viz.*,

1. Vaishnavas: Who worship the Lord as Vishnu;
2. Shaivas: Who worship the Lord as shiva; and
3. Saktas: Who adore Devi or the Mother aspect of the Lord.

In addition, there are the Sauras, who worship the Sun-God; Ganapatyas who worship Ganesh as supreme; and Kumaras who worship Skanda as the godhead.

The Vaishnavas are usually distinguished into four principal Sampradayas or sects. Of these, the most ancient is the Sri Sampradaya founded by Ramanuja Acharya about the middle of the twelfth century. The followers of Ramanuja adore Vishnu and Lakshmi, and their incarnations. They are called Ramanujas or Sri Sampradayins or Sri Vaishnavas. The teachers are Brahmins. The disciples may be of any caste. They all recite the Ashtakshara

Mantra: "Om Namo Narayanaya." They put on (display) two white lines and a central red line on the forehead.

Vedantacharya, a follower of Ramanuja, made some reform in the Vaishnava faith. This gave rise to the formation of two antagonistic parties of Ramanujas, one called the Northern School (Vadagalai) and the other the Southern School (Tengalai). The Tengalais regard Prapatti or self-surrender as the only way to salvation. The Vadagalais think that it is only one of the ways. According to them, the Bhakta or the devotee is like the young one of a monkey which has to exert itself and cling to its mother (Markata-Nyaya or Monkey Theory); whereas, according to the Southern School, the Bhakta or the devotee is like the kitten which is carried about by the cat without any effort on its own part (Marjala-Nyaya or Cathold Theory). The Northern School accept the Sanskrit texts, the Vedas. The Southerners have compiled a Veda of their own called 'Nalayira Prabandha' or 'Four Thousand Verses', in Tamil, and hold it to be older than the Sanskrit Vedas. Really, their four thousand verses are based on the Upanishad portion of the Vedas. In all their worship, they repeat sections from their Tamil verses.

The Vadagalais regard Lakshmi as the consort of Vishnu, Herself infinite, uncreated and equally to be adored as a means (Upaya) for release. The Tengalais regard Lakshmi as a created female being, though divine. According to them, she acts as a mediator or minister (Purushakara), and not as an equal channel of release.

The two sets have different marks on their foreheads. The Vadagalais make a simple white line curved like the letter U to represent the sole of the right foot of Lord Vishnu, the source of the River Ganga (Ganges). They add a central red mark as a symbol of Lakshmi. The Tengalais make a white mark like the letter Y that represents both the feet of Lord Vishnu. They draw a white line half way down the nose.

Both the sects brand the emblems of Vishnu-the discus and the conch-on their breasts, shoulders and arms. The Tengalais prohibit their widows from shaving their heads. The usual surnames of the Ramanuja Brahmins are Aiyangar, Acharya, Charlu and Acharlu.

Ramanandis

The followers of Ramananda are the Ramanandis. They are well-known in upper Hindusthan (India). They are branch of the Ramanuja sect. They offer their worship to Lord Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman. Ramananda was a disciple of Ramanuja. He flourished at Varanasi about the beginning of the fourteenth century. His followers are numerous in the Ganga (Ganges) valley of India. Their favourite work is the 'Bhakti-Mala.' Their sectarian marks are like those of the Ramanujas. The Vairagis are the ascetics among the Ramanandis.

Vallabhacharins or Rudra Sampradayins

The Vallbhacharins form a very important sect in Mumbai, Gujarat and the Central India. Their founder was born in the forest Camparanya in 1479. He is regarded as an incarnation of Krishna. The Vallabhacharins worship Krishna as Baba-Gopala. Their idol is one representing Krishna in his childhood till his twelfth year. The Gosains or teachers are family men. The eight daily ceremonials for God in the temples are Mangala, Sringara, Gvala, Raja Bhoga, Utthapana, Bhoga, Sandhya and Sayana. All these represent various forms of adoration of God.

The mark on the forehead consists of two red perpendicular lines meeting in a semicircle at the root of the nose and having a round dot of red between them. The necklace and rosary are made of the stalk of the Tulasi (holy Basil plant).

The great authority of the sect is the Srimad Bhagavata as explained in the Subodhini, the commentary thereon of Vallabhacharya. The members of the sect should visit Sri Nathdvara, a holy shrine, at least once in their lives.

The Chaitanyas (Hare Krishna Movement)

This sect is prominent in Bengal and Orissa. The founder Chaitanya Mahaprabhu or Lord Gouranga, was born in 1485. He was regarded as an incarnation of Lord Krishna. He took sannyasa (monkhood) at the age of twenty-four. He went to Jagannath where he taught Vaishnava doctrines.

The Chaitanyas worship Lord Krishna as the Supreme Being. All castes are admissible into the sect. The devotees constantly

repeat the Name of Lord Krishna. Chaitanya's Charitamrita by Krishna Das is a voluminous work. It contains anecdotes of Chaitanya and his principal disciples and the expositions of the doctrines of this sect. It is written in Bengali. The Vaishnavas of this sect wear two white perpendicular streaks of sandalwood paste or Gopichandan (a kind of sacred clay). Down the forehead uniting at the root of the nose and continuing to near the tip. They wear a close necklace of small Tulasi beads of three strings.

[Note: During the twentieth century, Swami Prabhupada, A.C. Bhaktivedanta became the founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness with branches all over the world. This movement urges devotees to recite with faith and devotion the following Hare-Krishna Mantra:

"Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare,

Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare"

'Rama' in the above mantra of the Hare-Krishna movement does not refer to Sri Rama from the Ramayana but to Balarama, the elder brother of Sri Krishna.]

You interestingly add in your text on Chaitanya philosophy that the Rama in the Maha-Mantra does not refer to the Sri Ramachandra from the Ramayana, but to Lord Balarama (Krishna's brother). I'll just quote a little from Srila Prabhupada:

"We may mention an incident that took place between two of our Sannyasis (monks).

While we were preaching the Hare Krsna Maha-Mantra in Hyderabad, one of them stated that "Hare Rama" refers to Sri Balarama, and the other protested that "Hare Rama" means Lord Rama. Ultimately the controversy came to me (Srila Prabhupada), and I gave the decision that if someone says that "Rama" in "Hare Rama" is Lord Ramacandra and someone else says that the "Rama" in "Hare Rama" is Sri Balarama, both are correct because there is no difference between Sri Balarama and Lord Rama.… Those who are aware of the Vishnu-tattva do not fight over all these details".

The Nimbarkas

The founder of this sect was Nimbarka or Nimbaditya. He was originally named Bhaskara Acharya. He is regarded as an

incarnation of the Sun-God (Surya). The followers worship Krishna and Radha (Krishna's consort) conjointly. Their chief scripture is the Srimad Bhagavata Purana.

The followers have two perpendicular yellowish lines made from Gopichandan clay and applied from the root of the hair to the commencement of each eye-brow and there meeting in a curve. This represents the footprint of Lord Vishnu.

The Nimbarkas or Nimavats are scattered throughout the whole of upper India. They are very numerous around Mathura. They are also the most numerous of the Vaishnava sects in Bengal.

The Madhavas

The Madhavas are Vaishnavas. They are known as Brahma Sampradayins. The founder of the sect was Madhavacharya, otherwise called Ananda Tirtha and also called Purna-Prajna. He was born in 1200 ad. He was a great opponent of Sankaracharya's Advaita system of philosophy. He is regarded as an incarnation of Vayu or the Wind-God. He erected and consecrated at Udipi the image of Lord Krishna. The Gurus of the Madhava sect are Brahmins and Sannyasins. The followers bear the impress of the symbols of Vishnu upon their breasts and shoulders. They are stamped with a hot iron. Their marks on the foreheads consist of two perpendicular lines made with Gopichandana and joined at the root of the nose. They make a straight black line (using charcoal from incense offered to Krishna), which terminates in a round mark made with tumeric. The Madhavas are divided into two classes called the Vyasakutas and the Dasakutas. They are found in Karnataka. Truthfulness, study of scriptures, generosity, kindness, faith and freedom from envy form the moral code of Madhavas. They give the Lord's names to their children (Namakarana Sanskar), and mark the body with His symbols (Ankana). They practise virtue in thought, word and deed (Bhajana).

Radha Vallabhis

Radha Vallabhis worship Krishna as Radha-Vallabha, the Lord or the Lover of Radha. Harivans was the founder of this sect. Seva Sakhi Vani gives a detailed description of the notion of this sect

and more of their traditions and observances. Charana Dasis, Dadu Panthis, Hari Chandis, Kabir Panthis, Khakis, Maluk Dasis, Mira Bais, Madhavis, Rayi Dasis, Senais, Sakhi Bhavas, Sadma Panthis, are all Vaishnava sects.

The Shaivas

The Shaiva Brahmins of the Tamil India have their title Aiyer. They are called Smartas. They all wear three horizontal lines of Bhasma or Vibhuti (holy ash) on their forehead. They all worship Lord Shiva. The different sects are:

1. *Vadamas:* Vada Desa Vadamas, Chola Desa Vadamas and Inji Vadamas
2. *Brihatcharanam:* Mazhainattu Brihatcharanam, Pazhamaneri Brihatcharanam, Milaghu Brihatcharanam and Kandramanikka Brihatcharanam
3. Vathimars
4. Ashtasahasram
5. *Choliyas:* Otherwise called Pandimars and inhabitants of Tiruchendur, and
6. *Gurukkal:* A sub-sect of Vadamas not recognized as one amongst them and whose duties are to worship at temples. They are also known by the name of Oattar in southern districts of Madras. These are different from Archaks. Archaks belong to any of the above sub-sects and inter-marry with persons of other professions, but not Gurukkal or Pattar. While Gurukkal is used only for Saivites, Pattar and Archak are used for Vaishnavites also.

Shaiva Brahmins of Malabar

1.Nambuduri 2.Muse, and 3.Embrantiri

Shaiva Brahmins of Bengal

1.Chakravarti 2.Chunder 3.Roy 4.Ganguli 5.Choudhury 6. Biswas 7. Bagchi 8. Majumdar, and 9.Bhattacharji

Shaiva Brahmins of Karnataka

1.Smarta 2. Haviga 3.Kota 4.Shivalli 5.Tantri 6.Kardi 7.Padya

Telugu Smartas

1.Murukinadu, 2.Velanadu 3.Karanakammalu 4.Puduru Dravidis 5.Telahanyam 6.Konasima Dravidi and 7.Aruvela Niyogis

Lingayats

They are called Vira Shaivas. They are found in Mysore and Karnataka. They wear on their neck a Linga of Lord Shiva that is placed in a small silver box.

Other Shaiva sects

Akas Mukhis, Gudaras, Jangamas, Karalingis, Nakhis, Rukharas, Sukharas, Urdhabahus, Ukkaras are all Shaiva sects.

The Saktas

The saktas are worshippers of Devi, the Universal Mother. Dakshinis, Vamis, Kancheliyas, Kararis are all Sakta sects.

Miscellaneous

The Sauras adore the Sun, the Ganapatyas adore Ganesh, and the Kaumaras adore Skanda.

The non-Brahmins of South India are Naidu, Kamma Naidu, Chetty, Mudaliar, Gounder, Pillai, Nair,Nayanar and Reddy.

Nanak Shahis of seven classes (*viz.*, Udasis, Ganj-bhakshis, Ramrayis, Sutra Shahis, Govinda Sinhis, Nirmalas, Nagas), Baba Lalis, Prana nathis, Sadhus, Satnamis, Shiva Narayanis are other miscellaneous sects.

The Arya Samaj

The founder of the Arya Samaj was Swami Dayananda Saraswati, who was born in Kathiawar in 1824. This Samaj is more of a social institution, with a religious background. It has Gurukulas, schools, and Pathshalas. The Suddhi Sabha is a proselytizing branch of the Arya Samaj.

[Note: The followers of the Arya Samaj do not perform idol worship. Swami Dayanand Saraswati wrote "Satyarth Parkash" (Light of Truth). This volume serves as the principal guiding light of the Arya Samaj. Some of the principles of the Arya Samaj are: God is the primary source of true knowledge and of all that is known by its means. The Vedas are the scriptures of all true knowledge. All acts ought to be performed in conformity with Dharma *i.e.* after due consideration of right and wrong. The primary object of the Arya Samaj is to do good to the world *i.e.* to ameliorate physical, spiritual and social standards of all men. All ought to be treated with love, justice, righteousness and due regard to their merits.]

The Brahmo Samaj

The Brahmo Samaj was founded originally by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, early in the nineteenth century. The Brahmo Samajists do not perform idol worship. Keshab Chandra Sen introduced some changes in the year 1860. There are now two branches within the Samaj, *viz.*, Adi Brahmo Samaj which holds to the tenets laid down by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Sadharana Barahmo Samaj which is somewhat modern and which follows Keshab Chandra Sen more closely. This Samaj has followers in Bengal.

The Jains

The first founder of the sect was Parsvanatha. Its first active propagator was Mahavira. The Jains are found in great numbers especially in the western coast of India. They are divided into two principal sects-the Svetambaras (clothed in white garments) and the Digambaras (sky-clad or naked).

The Jains do not admit the divine origin of the Vedas. They do not believe in any Supreme Deity. They pay reverence to holy men or saints who are styled Tirthankaras, who dwell in the heavenly abode and who, by long discipline, have raised themselves to divine perfection. The images of one or more of these Tirthankaras are placed in every Jain temple.

The Jains are strict vegetarians. They attach great sanctity to life. They practise Ahimsa (non-killing, non-violence). Strict Jains strain water before drinking, sweep the ground with a brush before treading on it or before sitting, never eat or drink at night and sometimes cover their mouths with muslin to prevent the risk of swallowing minute organisms. There are two classes of Jains, *viz.*, Sravakas who engage themselves in secular occupations and Yatis or monks who lead an ascetic life.

The Sikhs

"Sikhism, while some of its' founding Guru's were Hindu, was created as a response to Hinduism and the reign of the Muslim Mughal empires."-KS Gidda 'Obedience to the Guru brings release from future births' this is a firm conviction of the Sikhs. Sikhs adopt the five Kakas, *viz.*, 1. The Kes (uncut hair), 2. The Kachhca (short drawers), 3. The Kara (iron bangle), 4. The Kirpan (steel dagger), and 5. The Kangha (small-tooth comb worn in the hair).

The Udasis are an ascetic order of the Nanaksahi Sikhs. Srichand, son of Guru Nanak, embraced Sannyasa. Udasis are his followers. Lakshmichand, another son of Guru Nanak, led the life of a house-holder. Vedis are his followers. Nirmalas are ascetic followers of Guru Govind Singh.

The Akalis are brave warriors. The Akalis wear a distinctive dress of blue, and a black turban.

The teachings of Guru Nanak are contained in the first book of the Adi Granth.

No Sikh smokes tobacco.

Sadhus and Sannyasins

Salutations unto the ancient Rishis, seers, saints, paramhansa sannyasins and sadhus, who are the repositories of divine knowledge and wisdom and who guide the destiny of the world in the past, present and future.

Every religion has a band of anchorites who lead the life of seclusion and meditation. There are Bhikshus in Buddhism, Fakirs in Mohammedanism (Islam), Sufistic Fakirs In Sufism, and Fathers and Reverends in Christianity. The glory of a religion will be lost absolutely if you remove these hermits or Sannysins or those who lead a life of renunciation and divine contemplation. It is these people who maintain or preserve the religions of the world. It is these people who give solace to the householders when they are in trouble and distress. They are the messengers of the Atman-knowledge and heavenly peace. They are the harbingers of divine wisdom and peace. They are the disseminators of Adhyatmic science and Upanishadic revelations. They heal the sick, comfort

the forlorn and nurse the bedridden. They bring hope to the hopeless, joy to the depressed, strength to the weak and courage to the timid, by imparting the knowledge of the Vedanta and the significance of the ""Tat Tvam Asi" Mahavakya (great saying).

Dasanama Sanyasins

Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanat-Kumara and Sanat-Sujata were the four mind-born sons of Lord Brahma. They refused to enter the Pravritti Marga or worldly life and entered the Nivritti Marga or the path of renunciation. The four Kumaras were the pioneers in the path of Sannyasa. Sri Dattatreya also is among the original Sannyasins. The Sannyasins of the present day are all descendants of the four Kumaras, Dattatreya and Sankaracharya.

Sri Sankaracharya, regarded as an Avatara of Lord Shiva and the eminent exponent of Kevala Advaita philosophy, established four Maths (monasteries) one at Sringeri, another at Dvaraka, a third at Puri and a fourth at Joshi Math in the Himalayas, on the way to Badrinarayana shrine.

Sri Sankara had four Sannyasin disciples, *viz.*, Suresvara, Padmapada, Hastamalaka and Totaka. Suresvara was in charge of Sringeri Math, Padmapada was in charge of Puri Math, Hastamalaka was in charge of Dvarka Math and Totaka was in charge of Joshi Math.

The Sannyasins of Sringeri Math, the spiritual descendants of Sri Sankara and Suresvacharya, have three names, *viz.*, Sarasvati, Puri and Bharati. The Sannyasins of the Dvaraka Math have two names, *viz.*, Tirtha and Asrama. The Sannyasins of the Puri Math have two names, *viz.*, Vana and Aranya. The Sannyasins of the Joshi Math have three names, *viz.*, Giri, Parvata and Sagara.

The Dasanamis worship Lord Shiva or Lord Vishnu, and meditate on Nirguna Brahman. The Dandi Sannyasins, who hold staff in their hands, belong to the order of Sri Sankara. Paramhansa Sannyasins do not hold staff. They freely move about as itinerant monks. Avadhutas are naked Sannyasins. They do not keep any property with them.

The Sannyasins of the Ramakrishna Mission belong to the order of Sri Sankara. They have the name Puri.

Then, there are Akhada Sannyasins, *viz.*, Niranjana Akhada and Jhuni Akhda. They belong to the order of Sri Sankara. They are Dasanamis.

They are found in the Uttar Pradesh State only. Rishikesh and Haridwar are colonies for Sannyasins. Varanasi also is among the chief abodes of Sannyasins.

Shaivas

In South India, there are Tamil Sannyasins who belong to the Kovilur Math and Dharmaputram Adhinam. They do not belong to the Sri Sankara order. They are Shaivas.

Nagas

Nagas are Shaiva Sannyasins. They are in a naked state. They smear their bodies with ashes. They have beard and matted locks.

Udasis

Guru Nanak's order of ascetics is called Udasis. They correspond to Sannyasins and Vairagis. They are indifferent to the sensual pleasures of this world (Udasina). Hence they are called Udasis.

Vairagis

A Vairagi is one who is devoid of passion. Vairagis are Vaishnavas. They worship Lord Rama, Sita and Hanuman. They read the Ramayana of Tulasidas. The mendicant Vaishnavas of the Ramanandi classs are the Vairagis. Sri Ananda, the twelfth disciple of Ramananda, instituted this ascetic order.

Rama Sanehis

The founder of this order was Ramcharan who was born in the year 1718 in a village near Jaipur in Rajasthan. The Rama Sanehi mendicants are of two classes, *viz.*, the Videhis who are naked and the Mihinis who wear two pieces of cotton cloth dyed red in ochre.

Their monastery is in Shahapur in Rajasthan. The Rama Sanehi sect has the largest following in Mewar and Alwar. They are found also in Mumbai and Poona (in Maharashtra State), Surat, Ahmedabad in Gujarat State), and Hyderabad and Varanasi.

Kabir Panthis (panthi=followers)

Kabir Panthis are the followers of saint Kabir. They are numerous in all the provinces of Upper and Central India. There are twelve branches. Kabir Chaura is at Varanasi. It is a big monastery of Kabir Panthis. Dharamdas was the chief disciple of Kabir. The followers are expected to have implicit devotion to the Gurus, in thought, word and deed. They should practise truthfulness, mercy, non-injury and seclusion. The followers of Kamal, son of Kabir, practise Yoga.

Dadu Panthis

The Dadu Panthis form one of the Vaishnava cults. Dadu, the founder of this sect, was a disciple of one of the Kabir Panthi teachers. The followers worship Lord Rama. Dadu was a cotton cleaner. He was born at Ahmedabad. He flourished about the year 1600.

The Dadu Panthis are of three classes, *viz.*, the Viraktas who are bareheaded (clean shaven head) and have one cloth and one water-pot, the Nagas who carry arms and who are regarded as soldiers and the Vistar Dharis who do the avocations of ordinary life. The Dadu Panthis are numerous in Marwar and Ajmer. Their chief place of worship is at Naraina, which is near Sambhur and Jaipur. Passages from the Kabor writings are inserted in their religious scriptures.

Gorakhnath Panthis

Gorakhnath was a contemporary of Kabir. He is regarded as the incarnation of Lord Shiva. He calls himself as the son of Matsyendranath and grandson of Adinath. There is a temple of Gorakhnath at Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh. Bhartrihari was a disciple of Gorakhnath. Gorakhnath wrote Goraksha-Sataka, Goraksha-Kalpa and Goraksha-Nama. They are in Sanskrit.

The followers of Gorakhnath are usually called Kanphatas, because their ears are pierced and rings are inserted in them, at the time of their initiation. They worship Lord Shiva.

Nimbarka Sampradayis and Ramanuja Sampradayis

These are Sadhus of the Nimbarka Sampradaya. They are Vaishnavas. The Sannyasins of the Ramanuja Sampradaya wear

orange coloured cloth, a holy thread and tuft and Tri-danda or three-staff. At present, they are very few in number.

Parinami Sect

Sri Pirannath was the founder of this sect. He was born in 1675 at Jamnagarh, district Rajkot, in Kathiawar. He was the Devan (chief minister) of Raja Jam Jasa. The followers are to practise Ahimsa, Satya and Daya-non-violence, truthfulness and compassion. They study the sacred book, Kul Jam Svarup or Atma-Bodha, in Hindi, which contains the teachings of Sri Pirannath. It contains 18000 Chaupais. They worship Bala-Krishna, *i.e.*, Krishna as a small child.

The followers are found mostly in the Punjab, Gujarat, Assam, Nepal and Mumbai. There are two Maths or monasteries-one at Jamnagarh and the other at Pamna.

Smarta Sect

What is the universalistic Smarta Sect?

Smartism is an ancient brahminical tradition reformed by Shankara in the ninth century. Worshiping six forms of God, this liberal Hindu path is monistic, nonsectarian, meditative and philosophical. Aum Namah Shivaya.

Smarta means a follower of classical smriti, particularly the Dharma Shastras, Puranas and Itihasas. Smartas revere the Vedas and honour the agamas. Today this faith is synonymous with the teachings of Adi Shankara, the monk-philosopher, known as shanmata sthapanacharya, "founder of the six-sect system." He campaigned India-wide to consolidate the Hindu faiths of his time under the banner of Advaita Vedanta. To unify the worship, he popularized the ancient Smarta five-Deity altar-Ganapati Surya, Vishnu, Shiva and Shakti-and added Kumara. From these, devotees may choose their "preferred Deity," or Ishta Devata. Each God is but a reflection of the one Saguna Brahman. Shankara organized hundreds of monasteries into a ten-order, dashanami system, which now has five pontifical centres. He wrote profuse commentaries on the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras and Bhagavad Gita. Shankara proclaimed, "It is the one Reality which appears to our ignorance as a manifold universe of names and forms and

changes. Like the gold of which many ornaments are made, it remains in itself unchanged. Such is Brahman, and That art Thou." Aum Namah Shivaya.

Modern Hinduism

Following the decline of the Mughal Empire during the late 17th century, the British gradually succeeded in establishing themselves as the paramount power in India during the next century. The process began with a British victory in the Battle of Plassey in 1757, followed by the defeat of the Marathas in 1818. British victory over the Sikhs in 1846 completed the process. By this time the British had made two decisions of far-reaching importance for the future of Hinduism: to allow Christian missionaries to operate within the British dominions, in 1813; and to introduce English as the language of public instruction, in 1835. These decisions forced Hinduism to confront Christianity and Western modernity. At the same time, the Western world was exposed to Hindu scriptures translated into European languages.

Movements for Reform

One response to the encounter with Europe was reform. The Bengali scholar Ram Mohan Roy set the tone for reform in the early 19th century. Roy campaigned against medieval or regional Hindu practices that were objectionable in the modern world. He advocated allowing widows to remarry and abolition of the relatively rare practice of sati (self-immolation of a wife after her husband's death; see suttee). In 1828 Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj (Society of Brahma) to spread his ideas.

Another movement kept India from moving too far toward imitation of the modern Christian West. The movement was named after Ramakrishna, a Hindu spiritual leader who served as a priest at the Dakshineshwar Temple in the city of Kolkata (Calcutta). His reputation as a mystic drew many to him, including Swami Vivekananda, who founded the Ramakrishna movement after Ramakrishna's death in 1886. Vivekananda, a representative Hindu product of India's new English-language education system, became a devotee of Ramakrishna and renounced the world after the priest's death. His message was a return to the timeless wisdom of the Vedas. As an unknown swami, he turned up uninvited at

the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago in 1893 to present Ramakrishna's teachings. He won instant celebrity and was hailed as a hero in India for his vigorous advocacy of Hinduism. In 1895 he founded the Vedanta Society in New York City to promote Hindu ideas.

Vivekananda primarily used English in his work of reforming Hinduism and stressing the inclusive aspects of Hindu spirituality over ritual and rules. Another reform-minded leader of the 19th century, Dayananda Sarasvati, used Hindi in responding to the challenges of Christianity and modernity. Sarasvati founded the Arya Samaj, a movement also dedicated to modernizing Hindu practices and asserting the universality of the Hindu tradition. These movements helped revitalize Hinduism.

Another issue that engaged Hindu reformers was the plight of the lowest social class, the panchama jatis who are also known as untouchables. Local movements, such as one led by Sri Narayana Guru in Kerala, were most successful at reform. Narayana, who was born in 1856, believed that education and greater self-esteem, rather than confrontation and blame, would elevate the untouchables. He established temples where all castes could pray together.

Raja Ram tried to create a new Hindu religion philosophy and enfolded in it the existence of one God and other beliefs, which were then not the predominant features in Hinduism. He attacked some Hindu traditions and features among them caste system, child marriages, Sati-burning of the live wife over her dead husband's pyre, idolatry and other beliefs. He tried to change the popular Hindu traditions and claimed that the popular Hindu traditions were different from the real Hindu beliefs.

Raja Ram and his organization 'Brahmo Samaj' tried to change the social order of India. He established newspapers and schools all around India. He convinced the British in 1829 to outlaw Sati. But during that period there wasn't yet an Indian ethos among the Indians. Indians were never one nation but always a collection of different entities. They were used to different rulers including non-Indians. From their point of view the British were just another ruler over them (see India in the past). But the main contribution

of the Brahmo Samaj to the society of India was that it evoked issues that were common to people all around the Indian sub-continent. The notions of this organization were the inspiration for other organizations and various secular political parties, like the Indian National Congress, which were later on created in India (see Creating the Indian identity).

Sati-The Burning of the Widow

Sati is described as a Hindu custom in India in which the widow was burnt to ashes on her dead husband's pyre. Basically the custom of Sati was believed to be a voluntary Hindu act in which the woman voluntary decides to end her life with her husband after his death. But there were many incidences in which the women were forced to commit Sati, sometimes even dragged against her wish to the lighted pyre.

Though Sati is considered a Hindu custom, the women, known as Sati in Hindu religious literature, did not commit suicide on their dead husband's pyre. The first woman known as Sati was the consort of Lord Shiva. She burnt herself in fire as protest against her father who did not give her consort Shiva the respect she thought he deserved, while burning herself she prayed to reborn again as the new consort of Shiva, which she became and her name in the new incarnation was Parvati.

Other famous woman in Hindu literature titled Sati was Savitri. When Savitri's husband Satyavan died, the Lord of death, Yama arrived to take his soul. Savitri begged Yama to restore Satyavan and take her life instead, which he could not do. So Savitri followed Lord Yama a long way. After a long way in which Yama noticed that Savitri was losing strength but was still following him and her dead husband, Yama offered Savitri a boon, anything other than her husband's life. Savitri asked to have children from Satyavan. In order to give Savitri her boon, Lord Yama had no choice but to restore Satyavan to life and so Savitri gained her husband back.

These two women along with other women in Hindu mythology who were exceptionally devoted to their husbands symbolized the truthful Indian wife who would do everything for their husband and they were named Sati. The meaning of the

word sati is righteous. But as written earlier the women named Sati, in Hindu religious literature, did not commit suicide on their dead husband's pyre. Therefore the custom of burning the widow on her dead husband's pyre probably did not evolve from religious background but from social background.

There are different theories about the origins of Sati. One theory says that Sati was introduced to prevent wives from poisoning their wealthy husbands and marry their real lovers. Other theory says that Sati began with a jealous queen who heard that dead kings were welcomed in heaven by hundreds of beautiful women, called Apsaras. And therefore when her husband died, she demanded to be burnt on her dead husband's pyre and so to arrive with him to heaven and this way to prevent the Apsaras from consorting with her husband. There are also other theories about the origins of Sati.

Even though Sati is considered an Indian custom or a Hindu custom it was not practiced all over India by all Hindus but only among certain communities of India. On the other hand, sacrificing the widow in her dead husband's funeral or pyre was not unique only to India. In many ancient communities it was an acceptable feature. This custom was prevalent among Egyptians, Greek, Goths, Scythians and others. Among these communities it was a custom to bury the dead king with his mistresses or wives, servants and other things so that they could continue to serve him in the next world.

Another theory claims that Sati was probably brought to India by the Scythians invaders of India. When these Scythians arrived in India, they adopted the Indian system of funeral, which was cremating the dead. And so instead of burying their kings and his servers they started cremating their dead with his surviving lovers. The Scythians were warrior tribes and they were given a status of warrior castes in Hindu religious hierarchy. Many of the Rajput clans are believed to originate from the Scythians. Later on other castes who claimed warrior status or higher also adopted this custom.

This custom was more dominant among the warrior communities in north India, especially in Rajasthan and also among the higher castes in Bengal in east India. Among the Rajputs of

Rajasthan, who gave lot of importance to valor and self sacrifice, wives and concubines of the nobles even committed suicide, when they came to know that their beloved died in battlefield. In other parts of India it was comparatively low. And among the majority of Indian communities it did not exist at all.

A few rulers of India tried to ban this custom. The Mughals tried to ban it. The British, due to the efforts of Hindu reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy outlawed this custom in 1829.

There aren't exact figures about the number of Sati incidences. In general, before this custom was outlawed in 1829, there were a few hundred officially recorded incidences each year. Even after the custom was outlawed, this custom did not vanish completely. It took few decades before this custom almost vanished. But still there are rare incidences in which the widow demands to voluntary commit Sati. In 1987 an eighteen years old widow committed Sati in a village of Rajasthan with the blessing of her family members. In this incidence the villagers took part in the ceremony, praising and supporting the widow for her act. In October 1999 a woman hysterically jumped on her husband's pyre surprising everyone. But this incidence was declared suicide and not Sati, because this woman was not compelled, forced or praised to commit this act.

In different communities of India, Sati was performed for different reasons and different manners. In communities where the man was married to one wife, the wife put an end to her life on the pyre. But even in these communities not all widows committed Sati. Those women who committed Sati were highly honoured and their families were given lot of respect. It was believed that the woman who committed Sati blessed her family for seven generations after her. Temples or other religious shrines were built to honour the Sati.

In communities were the ruler was married to more than one wife; in some cases only one wife was allowed to commit Sati. This wife was normally the preferred wife of the husband. This was some kind of honour for the chosen wife and some kind of disgrace for the other wives. In other communities some or all of the wives and mistresses were immolated with the husband. And in some cases even male servants were immolated with the kings. This kind of Sati in which the wives and servants were treated as the

ruler's property intensifies the theory that Sati was introduced to India by the Scythian invaders of India.

In some very rare incidences mothers committed Sati on their son's pyre and in even more rare cases husbands committed Sati on their wives pyres.

Raj Ram Mohan Roy vs. Dayananda

Hindu Renaissance, which is referred to as a religious and political movement, is closely related to a burgeoning Indian Nationalism. Hindu revivalism is of vital importance in the development of Hinduism as a world religion. The Hindu Renaissance had a tendency to play down the difference between theological traditions and to regulate ritual level, below the ethical spirituality of the Upanishads and the Gita. Hindu reform movement developed to restore the perceived greatness of Hinduism's ancient past, to adopt rationalist elements form within Christianity, and to pay particular attention to social and ethical concerns. The leaders of Hindu renaissance like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Dayananda Saraswati played an important role in the awakening of social and religious reforms.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) was born of a distinguished Brahmin family in Bengal. He was educated at the Muslim University at Patna where he studied Arabic and Persian philosophical literature. He also studied Sanskrit in Varanasi, as well as English, Hebrew and Greek with a view to translating Bible into Bengali. Because of the Muslim influence, particularly Sufi, Roy was a St...

> *The main contribution of Brahmo Samaj to the society of India was that it evoked issues that were common to the people all around the Indian sub continent.*

They make faith in the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth optional. He wanted to return to the "Sanatana Dharma", the eternal law, which Hindus have moved away from by worshipping icons and reading Epics and Purans. He also supported remarriage of widows, if their previous marriage had not consummated. marriage by choice? the most ancient form of marriage in India-is the best form of marriage. He lost his faith in the Shaiva religion of image worship, when he saw mice climbing over the temple icon, eating

the food which had been offered to the deity. Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883) was born in Saurashtra in Gujarat to a Shaiva Brahman family.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, through his services, was considered the true leader of Renaissance and known as the "father of Renaissance". He believed that people should not be discriminating by their birth but by their Karma, actions. It was not a seperate religion but a reform movement within Hinduism.?

Dayananda Saraswati opposed the Varna system. The four Vedas are; Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, & Atharva Veda.?

Roy founded the Atmiya Sabha in 1815.

Beliefs of the Brahmo Samaj

The fundamental principles of the Brahmo Samaj, founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1828 are:

1. There is only one God, who is the creator, and the saviour of this world. He is spirit, infinite in power, wisdom, love, justice and holiness, omnipresent, eternal and blissful.
2. The human soul is immortal and capable of infinite progress, and is responsible to God for its doings.
3. Man's happiness in this and the next world consists in worshipping God in spirit and in truth.
4. Loving God, holding communion with Him, and carrying out His will in all the concerns of life, constitute true worship.
5. No created object is to be worshipped as God, and God alone is to be considered as infallible.

To this, Raja Ram Mohan Roy added "The true way of serving God is to do good to man." Since no one person is considered to be infallible, the Brahmos hold all the great religious leaders of the world in respect, and believe that truth is to be gleaned from all the scriptures of the world. To that extent, the Brahmo religion is truly eclectic. Universalist in nature, it is "dogmatically undogmatic".

The Brahmo Samaj has a great deal in common with the other free churches of the world, and is one of the founding members

of the "The International Association for Religious Freedom". Rationalist in everything, it does not deny the possibility of Divine Revelation, but reserves the right to test the validity of what is supposed to be revelation. The connection between the Brahmo Samaj and the other liberal churches of the world is best understood when we considered the basics of Universalism, which are dealt with in the following paragraphs:

Duncan Howlett has aptly described Universalism as a doctrine of

"Testing, Questing and never Resting, with Open Mind and Open Heart."

Each of these items bears detailed examination. The root question is how can we be sure about the truth of our beliefs? After all, there is no doubt that we human beings are fallible. The only way we can surmount our human fallibility is by continually testing the validity of our assumptions. We have to accept that we are prone to making mistakes and deceiving one another all the time. Even in the age of computers, there is always the possibility of mistakes being made in programming or worse still, valuable data being lost on account of viruses deliberately planted by misguided souls. We must therefore check everything by all the means at our disposal. This is true even in the case of religion, where we can no longer be certain of the infallibility of scriptures or prophets.

If our human capacity for error is a severe limitation, then our imagination and probing curiosity are surely among our greatest assets. It is the human spirit of inquiry and questing, in other words, seeking for the truth, which is behind all advances in Philosophy or Religion. The enquiring mind pushes beyond ideas that we already have, in order to discover new perfections. In this process of Questing, we are never really satisfied until we feel that we have gone as far as is humanly possible.

This is what is meant by "never Resting". On the path of discovery we are bound to meet like-minded souls also engaged in the same search for truth. We must be open to dialogue with them, and at least listen to them even if we do not agree. The spirit of the "open mind" is a safeguard against dogma, which has no place in Universalism.

While the open mind enlarges our own frontiers, it is not enough to merely be open to other ideas. Acceptance of the other person as a brother and a comrade makes religion truly universal. Merely accepting that "In the Father's house there are many mansions" does not better our human lot the way "Love thy neighbour as thyself" does. True Universalism is based on the "Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man" more than anything else.

Universalists believe that religion should be dynamic and not static. Everything in this world is evolving, and religion too, changes with time. Any religion that adheres to a set of unchanging beliefs is a dead religion. Of course, any change has to be tested for validity by applying our God given powers of logic and reasoning, and must be acceptable to our conscience. The Brahmos believe that God reveals Himself in His own creation, and speaks to man through his conscience. The relationship between God and man is one of loving and giving. Our life is a gift from God. What we do with our life is our gift to God.

History of the Brahmo Samaj

As British rule consolidated in India during the 18th century, two factors contributed to the formation of the Brahmo Samaj in the following century. Firstly the Hindu social system had begun to stagnate and placed too much of an emphasis on traditional rituals. Secondly an English educated class of Indians began to emerge to fulfil the administrative and economic needs of British rule. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a Bengali, was a product of the latter trend. What made Raja Ram Mohan Roy stand out from his peers was his questioning mind. Apart from knowing several languages he was a Sanskrit and an Arabic scholar, and studied several religions. He campaigned for social reform and women's education. He founded the Brahma Samaj at Calcutta in 1828, which was initially known as the "Brahmo Sabha." Later in 1868 it was changed to the "Adi" (Original) Brahmo Samaj. It rejected idol worship and the worship of multiple gods and goddesses of the traditional Hindu beliefs.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was much influenced by western thought, especially Christianity. He was one of the first Hindus

to visit Europe, where he was much admired by the intellectuals. He died in Bristol.

He was friendly with another famous Bengali, Dwarakanath Tagore. Prior to his departure to Europe, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had asked Dwarakanath Tagore's son, Debendranath Tagore, to continue his work in his absence. Debendranath Tagore took an active interest in the Brahmo Samaj, and began to transform the Brahmo Samaj into a spiritual fraternity. He formulated the "Brahmo-upadesa" which were a set of readings from the ancient Hindu book, the "Upanishads."

Debendranath Tagore's successor was Keshab Chandra Sen. He sought to incorporate Christian ideals into the Brahmo Samaj movement. He began the compilation of a scripture including passages from the Holy Books of many religions-Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and Muslim.

Gradually, due to differences in certain areas of religious beliefs, three institutions arose:

- The Adi (Original) Brahmo Samaj-founded by Debendranath Tagore
- The Naba-Bidhan (New Dispensation) Samaj-founded by Keshab Chandra Sen
- The Sadharan (Common) Brahmo Samaj-founded by Pandit Shivanath Shastri

The Sadharan Brahmo Samaj sought to provide a more rational and monotheistic interpretation of the Upanishads. A "mandir" (prayer house) was built in Cornwallis Street, (now re-named "Bidhan Sarani") Calcutta. Eventually these three Samajes united to form the "Brahmo Sammilan Samaj," and a "mandir" was built in Bhowanipur, Calcutta. This celebrated its centenary in 1997.

The Brahmo Samajes grew in several Indian cities and abroad. There are records of one being present in Rangoon and in London as far back as 1911.

Social Welfare

Removing The Caste System: The caste system has been a part of Hindu society for hundreds of years. It's inherent divisive nature and social injustices were abhorrent to the early Brahmos.

Therefore an important reform that the early Brahmos campaigned for was the removal of the caste system.

Many of the early Brahmos came from the Brahmin caste, who wore a sacred thread around their body to signify their caste superiority. From the 1850's onwards the renunciation of the sacred thread came to symbolise this break with tradition.

The equality of all men was fundamental to the Brahmo movement, and to them it did not matter what caste or indeed religion someone was born into. For example even in 1865 there was a case of a Muslim boy being attracted into the religion. Given the polarization of society between Hindus and Muslims at the time, this was revolutionary in those days.

Widow Remarriage: Despite Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's campaign that led to the legalisation of widow remarriage (1856) in India, Hindu society had many reservations on this issue. The Brahmos campaigned against such pre-judices. To reinforce their commitment to this many young men of the Brahmo movement made a positive point of marrying widows.

Saving of Upper Caste Unmarried Women: It wasn't just the lower castes who suffered in the caste system. Despite their caste status, the girls from the upper caste families suffered because of their position.

If a suitable bridegroom could not be found for such a girl in their caste, their options were limited, as marriage to lower caste men was not permitted. These girls often found themselves being married off to very old men who were already married several times over.

Or worse still, sometimes these girls would be poisoned to death. Again the Brahmos campaigned against such unjust practices and saved the lives of many such girls.

Women's Education and Status: Traditionally education had been primarily for the men. However during the 1860's and the 1870's the attitude of the Brahmos started to change. Education was encouraged among the Brahmo women.

At the same time their equal status in society was emphasised by allowing women to pray with men at the prayer halls. In 1881

the Brahmo Samaj at Barishal (Bengal) appointed the first woman Brahmo preacher (Manorama Mazumdar).

This article was written by Dr. Sumit Chanda, based on source material provided by the Brahmo Sammilan Samaj at Calcutta. The drawings originally formed part of the Poster Exhibition held in August-September, 1997, on the occasion of the Centenary celebration of the Brahmo Sammilan Samaj. These have been reproduced with the kind permission of Mr. P.R. Das Gupta, the Secretary of the Brahmo Sammilan Samaj.

Brahmo Wedding: In a Brahmo wedding, the bride and the groom, as adults, declare in an open house that each is willing to accept the other as a partner for life. Thus a Brahmo wedding has no tradition of "giving away" the daughter by her parents. The bride and the groom pray to God together and take their nuptial vows. The minister and the other fellow Brahmos pray for their welfare and future happiness. The bride and groom typically exchange garlands and rings, and the prayers are complemented by singing of hymns.

Millennium Sermon: On the first Maghotsav of this century and in the new millennium I would like to share with you some thoughts that have crossed my mind. The word January comes from the Roman God Janus, who had two heads-one pointing to the past, and one pointing to the future.

As we are celebrating Maghotsav in January at the beginning of the century, it is befitting that we first take a look at the past, and then into the future.

A look at the past takes us to the Renaissance in India, and in Bengal in particular. In 1828 the Brahmo Samaj was established by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who was followed by other leaders like Keshab Chandra Sen and Shivanath Shastri. It was a time of great spiritual social reforms against casteism and the emancipation of women.

It was a period when superstitious and evil customs like the suttee were abolished. It an era when great educational institutions were established in Calcutta. That era has also seen the birth of men like Ramakrishna and Rabindranath and preachers of a non-

violence like Mahatma Gandhi. We have seen the birth of the largest democratic nation when India achieved independence in 1947.

During the last century we have seen tremendous advances in the field of science and medicine. We have made great strides in developing transport-faster cars, trains and planes. Men have landed on the moon and we have watched it sitting in our own homes on TV.

The past century has made enormous progress in the field of computers and satellite communication-the mobile phones and telecommunications by way of videoconferences in distant lands has brought the world closer. The world has become smaller and closer. Countries no longer think individually. They take a global view of trade and commerce.

However in spite of all the scientific achievements and material comforts have we made any real progress in moral and human values? Are human hearts and minds now closer to each other than 500 years ago?

The 1900s have seen two World Wars-the people of the past century have experienced fighting and bloodshed and the horrific destruction of Nagasaki with the atom bomb.

In spite of modern communications systems, communities seem to have grown apart and divided, as we have seen in Bosnia and very recently in the atrocities of Kosovo and now in Chechnya. At present and there are many wars going on in Africa and Asia with the devastating consequences of land mine injuries long afterwards.

Our social structure and family life has also changed. The extended family is on the brink of extinction. The advances in medicine have increased longevity, but are we able to provide a reasonable quality of care? Can we spare a little time for visiting elderly friends? Do we as human beings care for other humans and the plants and animals of this beautiful world?;

Today at the beginning of the 21st century let us attempt to try to look at the future. We do not know what the future holds for us; but we can hope that the world will be a better place for

all of us. The world, we can hope, will be a peaceful place-not only will there be peace among nations, but also in the hearts all men who will fulfil their duties towards the old, the sick and hungry. Societies and nations will not just think of their own survival but will work for the benefit of others, which is one of the ideals of the promise of the Brahmo Samaj, and that the other principles- "truth, justice and love" shall prevail in the hearts of men and women of the 21st century.

We hope that the hearts and the minds of all the people in the world will be united and the century will be a happier place for all of us. It may seem like a dream but it is up to each one of us to make an effort, however small towards achieving this dream-and making this place a better place.

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