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EDITORIAL

IT WAS TEN YEARS ago that the idea of the present periodical dawned on the editor. He had occasion to work in the India Office Library, London, and he saw that India suffered from comparison with the other Dominions what with Indian periodicals lying cheek by jowl with those coming from these countries. He realized that a journal measuring up to international standards of historical scholarship would be needed to redress the balance. Happily, with better conditions prevailing in our Colleges and the establishment of Departments of History in the increasing number of Universities in the country, history was attracting talent. There has indeed been an outburst of historical research in recent years.

When he broached the suggestion to the specialists, the rising ones as well as the veterans offered him their willing cooperation. They would support the venture by contributing authoritative accounts of their own researches.

The scope of *India Past and Present* is the knowledge of India from prehistoric times to the present day. Never before has so much been known about the subject. The Archaeological Survey of India and the University Departments are adding to our knowledge of prehistoric India, the Epigraphical Survey is bringing out precious source material of Ancient and Medieval India, while the opening of the National and State Archives to the interested public has brought about a veritable renaissance in the history of Modern India and Contemporary History. *India Past and Present* intends to keep its readers constantly and diligently informed of the important archaeological discoveries and additions of epigraphical, numismatic, and archival material as well as estimate the work of those who are recreating the past.

India Past and Present is a biannual publication. The inaugural volume is being dedicated to the memory of the late Mr. Sourindranath Roy.

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Souvin Roy

SOURINDRANATH ROY—ARCHIVIST AND HISTORIAN

GEORGE M MORAES

THE LATE MR. SOURINDRANATH ROY—"Sourin" as he was affectionately known among his friends—had undertaken to share with me the editorial responsibility for the present journal. He suggested its name *India Past and Present* and volunteered to conduct a column on diverse historical topics under the caption: *Notes and Queries*. "It may be run," he wrote in his letter dated Christmas 1982 eleven days before he passed away on January 5, "as a forum for those being exercised by genuine curiosity about historical matters as also for those who are in a position to answer them. It will, if started, I venture to believe, remove a long-felt want." He also gave me the names of the scholars who could be depended upon to support the journal with their contributions but advised that it should not come out unless it was ahead of articles for at least two issues.

A professional archivist who could say the last word on his subject, he was also *sans pareil* in matters historical to which he happened to apply his genius, being capable of forestalling scholars in their own exclusive and chosen fields of study. Though Marxist in his leanings, he would not take Marx on trust. In his remarkable article "Recent Trends in Indian Research Activities in Modern Indian History," in which he estimates at their true worth works produced of late under Marxist inspiration, he declared that in such works of familiar Marxist interpretation theoretical speculation overrode objective analysis of evidence.¹ A classical scholar combining knowledge of Greek, Latin and Sanskrit, he must have appreciated the declaration of Thucydides that as regards material facts, when he had not been an eyewitness himself, he had investigated with the utmost accuracy attainable every detail he had taken at second hand. Roy must have clasped to his heart the principles of genuine history set down by Cicero: "that it is the first law of history that it dare say nothing which is false nor fear to utter anything that is true, in order that there may be no suspicion either of partiality or hostility in the writer." He must have been highly impressed by the twin counsel of our own classical historian Kalhana who wished that history should be interestingly written and truthfully told.

A man of principles, Roy stayed on an even keel, not taken off his feet by a blind admiration for anything. An agnostic, he yet held that if God's existence cannot be proved, neither can God's non-existence. Inclined towards Communism, he yet contended that if a confessional State cannot be secular, nor can

any of the States that have come under the heel of Communism. "For, in the place of the old God of the popular creeds, Communism has placed on the altar an entirely new deity bearing the high-sounding name of Dialectical Materialism, a deity, more aggressive, more ruthless and far more intolerant" than anything that has so far struck the human mind. ("Atheism as a Way of Life." *The Radical Humanist*, June 1981, pp. 27-29 under the pen-name of Ulysses Young).

A tribute paid to Roy by Professor Sudhir Ranjan Das in his letter to me of 6 July merits permanent record, bringing out as it does his dominant characteristic.

I have been very much moved by your letter bearing a touching reference to Sourinda who was to me a most revered academic personality, possessing a profound and penetrating power of seeing into and understanding diverse and perplexing trends in the history of our country. I have hardly come across a person of his stature in our academic circles. As you know, his intensive research encompassed the whole range of Indian history with all nicety and perfection. His was an analytical mind hardly enduring, let alone compromising with, any trash historical writings, about which you have made a pointed reference in your letter. His demise has been an irreparable loss to us all.

Lord Acton said that impartial history can have no friends. Roy must have offended quite a few. Non-partisan historians can seldom be popular.

Archivist

Born on 16 June 1911 at Lohagara, Jessore District, now in Bangladesh, Roy was a brilliant product of the Presidency College, Calcutta, and the Calcutta University. He scored both his B.A. and M.A. with distinction. Yet he had a chequered career. He started from the lowest echelon, that of an Assistant, when he joined in 1939 the Imperial Records Department, now the National Archives of India. It was only by slow degrees that he rose to become the Deputy Director of Archives when in an officiating capacity he had occasion to occupy the highest post—that of Director of Archives—from September 1960 to December 1961.

At his entry into the Archives he was confronted by an uncharted sea of documents. Archives-keeping at this time had sunk to its lowest depth, signifying, in his own words, "no more than mere keeping of inactive documents."² A colossal task awaited him. He rose equal to it. He immediately started surveying the records, a practice, diligently pursued over the years, made him a legend. When Surendranath Sen joined in as Director soon after and embarked on a vast programme of indexing, calendaring and publishing of documents with a

view to making the archives serviceable, Roy became his trusted and indispensable aide. Under this programme two volumes were published of detailed indexes to the Land Revenue Records, 1830-1859, and materials were prepared for a third volume relating to the proceedings of the Select Committee and the Secret Department 1756-1780, dealing with country as well as foreign powers. The calendaring was speeded up of what is called Persian Correspondence, an important series consisting of correspondence maintained in Persian between the Company's servants and the Indian Princes and notables as also foreign powers. He was entirely responsible for the preparation of biographical and historical notes to the texts of documents published. He was also the brain behind the project of publishing select documents from the National Archives written in the principal Indian languages. It fell to his lot to trace the Sanskrit documents for this series, to decipher and transcribe the text, to provide a full critical apparatus for each document, to prepare its English translation, to compile detailed notes on obscure names, words and expressions occurring therein, and to select material for the introduction of the volume for being written by the Director.³

This volume, consisting of twenty-five documents, was published by J.N. Jha Institute, Allahabad, in 1951 under the title *Sanskrit Documents 1778-1857*. It begins with two memoranda sent to the British Government through Thompson, Warren Hastings' attorney in India. Thompson approached the Governor-General-in-Council and the latter agreed to act as post office. The memoranda refer to the specific acts of Hastings which were particularly calculated to benefit the pilgrims to Banaras, e.g. the abolition of undue and illegal exactions of the Gangaputras or officiating priests, facilities for free and unrestricted performance of religious rites, the appointment of the upright Ali Ibrahim Khan as Chief Magistrate of Banaras, and the construction of a *naubat khana* or musical gallery near the gateway of the Visvanatha Temple, an act of homage which was very much appreciated, coming as it did from a Christian ruler. The Pandits were grateful to Hastings for his patronage of Sanskrit learning and speak of the rare kindness they received at his hands during his second visit to the holy city.

The fourth document is a letter (dated 2 March 1971) from Banuji Maharaj, head of the Maharaj sect at Surat, styling herself Gosvamini Maharajni, who is soliciting the indulgence of Lord Cornwallis, the Governor General, to open correspondence with him. She makes the important observation that, owing to the persecution of the sect in the place of its origin, Muttra, its headquarters had to be shifted to Surat. She praises the English "through (whose) power and rule religious prejudice disappeared." Document IX is a letter in which the grateful priests, abbots, recluses, Vaishnavas, Brahmanas, and the royal preceptor of Puri, headed by Krishna Chandra Mahapatra, pay a humble tribute to Lord

Wellesley for his peaceful annexation of Orissa. They assure him of their prayers "night and day to God that the supremacy of the English power may last for ever. ..." During the second Maratha War, it was the deliberate policy of Wellesley to cultivate the people of Cuttack to wrest this Maratha province. He even engaged the services of a famous Bengali pandit to reassure the people that "the British Government not only permits the Hindus to enjoy the free exercise of their religion, but manifests the greatest degree of benevolence, favour and indulgence towards them." And to show that the hope they had expressed in their letter that before long pilgrims from all over would pour into the holy city may not be in vain, the English abolished the tax of eleven rupees which the Maratha Government used to levy on each pilgrim. As a result, there was such an influx of pilgrims that it was found necessary to prohibit export of foodgrains from the province.

There are diplomatic and legal documents included in the volume as also petitions and memorials. The notes appended to the documents by Roy are an eloquent testimony to his wide-ranging scholarship, adding as they do so much to our knowledge. They are a model worthy to be followed by any editor. Professor V. Raghavan was not exaggerating a bit when he remarked in his review of the book (*The Hindu* June 22, 1952) that the documents could not have been better edited.

Lastly, Roy had a major share in editing *The Browne Correspondence 1782-85* (National Archives of India, 1960, 363 pp.) inasmuch as it was he who discovered the volume containing the correspondence, located the material missing from the volume, provided the text with full critical notes, compiled detailed notes on personal and place names, technical terms and historical allusions occurring in the text, and collected the material from a wide variety of sources for the introduction to the volume.

Major James Browne was chosen by Warren Hastings for the onerous task of restoring Shah Alam's authority during the struggle for the control of Delhi and the Emperor among the chief claimants for power: Mirza Shafi Khan, Afzias Khan, Najab Quli Khan and Muhammad Beg Hamdani. Browne, however, proved a poor judge of character. When in February 1784 he met Shah Alam and Afzias Khan, who had succeeded to the ministership, and was shown Sindia's letters proposing an alliance against the English, he wrote to Hastings that the letters "were of a quality to convey light to the blind and hearing as no more than forgeries. Even if Sindia sought to secure control of affairs in Delhi, it did not necessarily mean hostility towards the English. Eventually, Shah Alam was brought under his control and Sir John Macpherson, the successor of Hastings, seeing the futility of maintaining two envoys, one at Gwalior

and the other at Delhi, recalled Browne on 1 March 1783. When the latter delayed his departure, he sent him a peremptory order to return, and Browne had his audience of dismissal with the *roi fainéant* on 20 April 1785.

Division of Archives

A little before Partition in 1947, the records of the Central Government were in imminent danger of physical division between the incipient States of Pakistan and India. It was contended on behalf of the former that "all records of Muslim interest prior to the year 1857 should be given to the Pakistan Government and all those subsequent to that year may be kept by the Hindu Government." It would be open to either of the emerging states to arrange copies to be taken of the documents in their possession. And in this way it would be possible to maintain in both the countries the continuity of the original series as before. But the physical division should take place immediately. Pakistan sought to support its viewpoint, asserting that "instances of countries could be cited where the division of records did take place on partitioning of the country."⁴

In the reply which he prepared, Roy called off the Pakistani bluff by stating that there is not a single instance of a country where physical division of the archives has taken place consequent on partition. The reason is that any attempt at dividing the Central records would make both the emerging collections lose their archival and evidential value. An archival collection is an inter-related series, and accordingly the importance of keeping an archival series intact has long been recognized in European countries. Nearer home, the Government of India did not surrender the archives to the Malay States when it ceased to administer these States. Neither did it hand over to the Dutch the records relating to Java when this island was restored to the latter. Nor were the Central records relating to Burma transferred from Delhi to Rangoon on Burma's separation from India.⁵

The Imperial Records Department, the Central Archives, was thus saved thanks to the presence on the spot of a competent officer who had made, as he himself says, "a special study of international practices with regard to the treatment of archives affected by political changes and territorial redistribution." The memorandum⁶ of Roy on the basis of which the division of the archives of the undivided Government of India was forestalled is far more conclusive—and the best attempt so far—than the near classic study: "Effects of Changes of Sovereignty on Archives" in the *American Archives*, July 1942. As the same *Journal* aptly remarked in its issue of October 1947, "the division of files and records between India and Pakistan (was) one of the biggest problems confronting

ting the Partition Council." It is thus all the more creditable that Roy should have solved the problem in the midst of the prevailing gloom yielding to despair that there was no way of saving the Central Archives from being partitioned when the country itself was doomed to share this fate.

Archival Legislation

Roy was again able to give of his best when in his capacity as officiating Director of Archives (1960-61) he became *ipso facto* Secretary of the Committee appointed in August 1959 to advise the Government regarding the desirability or otherwise of making a law applicable to archives in India, and produced a masterly report on archival legislation. (Committee on Archival Legislation, 1959, *Report*, New Delhi, National Archives of India, 1960, 143 + iv pp.). In his view the National Archives of India should have under its control the repositories not only of the ministries but also of such record-creating bodies as (1) Departments subordinate to the Secretariat or the Attached Offices (namely, those having all-India jurisdiction, those whose jurisdiction affects an entire State or a bigger region embracing several States, those whose activities are limited to a small area like a division or district, small units or field offices serving a very small area like a sub-division, town or even a village, and educational or research institutions run by a Government Department); (2) Bodies outside the Secretariat, but forming an integral part of the Central Government set-up (e.g., the Union Public Service Commission, the Comptroller and Auditor-General, the Planning Commission, the Prime Minister's Secretariat, the President's Secretariat and the Cabinet Secretariat); (3) Boards, Committees, Commissions etc., set up under the authority of the Government of India; (4) Statutory bodies of All-India character; (5) National Enterprises and Undertakings; (6) Parliament (including Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Secretariats as well as the Secretariats of all legislative bodies of pre-Independent days as also those emanating from the Constituent Assembly); (7) The Supreme Court except that the Court would enjoy the freedom in full measure to deal with its own records subject, however, to a statutory obligation to select and preserve records of permanent value in accordance with accepted standards.

It was only natural that a fundamental principle of archives keeping be enforced in all public offices, making it obligatory to keep their records arranged in the original order of their creation, to refrain from disturbing that order on any account, and from dividing the records for reasons of any organizational or jurisdictional change. The filing practice should also follow a set pattern, ensuring that a file's contents are adequately described by its title, that no file is used to house papers on a subject other than it was originally intended to deal with, that files dealing with policy decisions are not cluttered with papers relating to par-

ticular applications of those decisions, and that on no account matters of mere routine are allowed entry into a regular file of any category whatever.

The records in public offices should be subjected to a first review not later than five years after they have passed out of active use and be destroyed if found useless for their own departmental purposes. The criterion to be used while reviewing a file is whether the file is likely to be needed should a circumstance similar to that which led to its origin happen to arise again. The documents surviving the first review should be subjected to a second review when they reach the 25th year and any paper deemed unworthy of further retention at this stage should be disposed of. Care, however, should be taken to see that the files containing papers which are important, even if indirectly, as sources of any aspect of history (political, military, social, economic etc.) or which are or may prove to be of biographical interest are not destroyed. The files surviving the second review should be regarded as mature for retirement and should be transferred immediately to the National Archives of India. It is the duty of the National Archives to assist the Departments in selecting the records and ensure their permanent preservation under its custody.

The States should also enact laws providing for all public bodies under their control and this legislation should cover State legislatures, High Courts and other Courts and the local governments (District Boards, Municipalities etc.), provision being made in each case for their management, appraisal, retirement and accessibility.

As to private archives it is best that their preservation and management are left to private initiative which may where necessary be reinforced by state-aid, flowing either from the Centre or from the States in which they are situated. Universities, learned societies, libraries and historical societies should also be encouraged to acquire and arrange for the preservation of collections, worthy of permanent preservation. Financial assistance may be granted to them as and when called for.

It should be said in appreciation of the report that its eagle eye has left no record-creating agency, public or private, out of its ken. The legislation intended to be framed on the basis of this report would have saved the immense archival wealth of the nation which in the absence of proper safeguards is left to perish every moment.

Archival Estrays

In his talk entitled "Unimportant Documents" in the series "The National Archives of India", broadcast from the Delhi Station of the All India Radio,

than breaking them up or "methodising" to suit the changing mood of the moment. At the same time it came to be realized that the first duty of the archivist was to make his materials readily available to their users, leading to a radical expansion of the publication programme of the Record Office.

Of this new orientation the leading lights in the West were Cyril Thomas Flower, Hilary Jenkinson and Solon Justus Buck.

Of a legal turn of mind, Cyril Thomas Flower (1879-1961), a medievalist of repute, was attracted by the Curia Regis Rolls of which he copied and edited thirteen volumes with meticulous care. Equally celebrated are his *Public Works in Medieval Law*. These editorial enterprises provided the necessary background for the long-range and comprehensive studies of Medieval England which were published later by other scholars.

Charles Hilary Jenkinson (1882-1961) was from his early days interested in tracing the vagaries of the documentary hand and the changing forms of the public record, a curiosity which, when developed, led to the formulation of the cognate sciences of diplomatic and palaeography. The science of sigillography also owes its development in England to his scholarly interest in the problems of repairing and conserving seals in decay. He discovered the basic principles of archives-keeping while engaged in listing and arranging the Exchequer of Receipts records, a task which started him on the investigation of the original arrangement of the Rolls. These basic principles became the corner-stone of his classic *Manual of Archive Administration* (1922) which has since been accepted as the most authoritative guide for archive-work in the English-speaking world. He played an important part along with collaborators such as Flower in the foundation of the British Records Association (1932) for educating public opinion in the conservation of historical records. Thanks to its efforts local repositories have been opened throughout England, drawing into their custody every variety of local records.

Solon Justus Buck (1884-1962) solved the problem of arranging the huge mass of records of the Federal Government of U.S.A. housed in the National Archives in a consultable manner, providing them with keys and guides. Under the 'Record Group' concept a unified body of records is set up in accordance with the principle of provenance and this body is usually coterminous with the total archival assets of a record-creating agency. Every document in the National Archives is physically integrated with one or other of the groups. Each group is provided with a 'registration sheet' indicating its provenance, its history, its chronological range and the scope and nature of its contents. And the reference to the records is facilitated by the check-listing and the compilation of the inventories, replacing the old and slow process of calendaring and descriptive

listing of the documents.

An equal of his Western contemporaries, Surendranath Sen (1890-1962) raised the Central Archives, now the National Archives of India, from a mere store of inactive documents to the position it enjoys today as a centre of historical research. Sen was opposed to any theoretical approach to history, maintaining that no formula of the present could be of use in recapturing the past. And emphasizing the value of original sources, he got the policy of the Government changed by throwing open the Central Archives to all genuine seekers of knowledge. This was a measure which had the same effect as the opening of the Vatican Archives (1881) and the Public Record Office, London (1886), had on historical studies in Europe.

As already demonstrated, Sen owed his success largely to Roy's genius, a fact which ranks the latter among the four path-finders, being the fifth, though in a spirit of self-abnegation, so characteristic of him, he let his chief have the entire credit.

Historian

Roy commenced research in Indian history early in life when he undertook to examine under the guidance of Professor H.C. Raychaudhuri of the Calcutta University the attempt of Bhattasali to bring forward the date of the accession of Chandragupta Maurya to 313 B.C. from c 324-23 B.C.—the accepted date. The results of this investigation were published in an article contributed to *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol. XI (1934), pp. 211-22 under the caption "Date of the First Maurya Emperor".

Bhattasali had argued that Aśoka's accession took place 214 years after the Nirvāṇa of the Buddha which occurred in 477 B.C. Aśoka must therefore have come to the throne in 264/263 B.C. Adding to 264/263 B.C. forty-nine years filled by the reigns of Chandragupta and Bindusāra, twenty-four and twenty-five to be exact, we get 313 B.C. as the first regnal year of Chandragupta. The argument, however, is fallacious as Bhattasali uses simultaneously two systems of chronology.

According to the *Mahāvamsa* Bindusāra ruled for twenty-eight years, while the Purāṇas give him a rule of twenty-five years only. We cannot accept and reject the validity of the *Mahāvamsa* tradition, as Bhattasali is doing, in accepting 264 years and rejecting 28. If we reject the one, Roy rightly contends, we should reject the other also. Moreover, it is still to be proved that the Nirvāṇa took place in 477 B.C. Hardly any evidence can be adduced in favour of any possible existence of such a reckoning.

The second argument for advancing the accession of Chandragupta is that Asoka's Rock Edict XIII should be dated 248/247 B.C. having been promulgated not earlier than the twelfth year of his coronation, i.e., the sixteenth year of his reign. Now adding sixty-five (made up of sixteen years of Asoka and forty-nine, the total of Chandragupta and Bindusara) will bring us to 313 as the first regnal year of the former.

Roy makes short work of this argument by pointing out that all the Greek kings mentioned in Rock Edict XIII were living in 258 B.C. which is the date of the death of Magas of Cyrene, one of these kings. The edict therefore could not have been published later than 256 B.C. even when allowance is made of two years for the news of Magas's death to reach Pataliputra. Then again Bactria is conspicuous by its absence in this Rock Edict. A powerful state, Bactria was on the confines of Asoka's empire. How then is it that Asoka did not think it necessary to establish cordial relations with it while he sent embassies to distant kingdoms of the Mediterranean? The answer is that Bactria did not exist. It became independent only in 256 B.C. The edict could not have been promulgated later than this date. Moreover, according to Ceylonese tradition, as seen above, Asoka came to the throne 214 years after the Buddha. Subtracting 14 from 486, taking the latter year as the date of the Nirvāṇa, we get 272 as the date of Asoka's accession. This would bring us to 256 B.C. as the twelfth year of Asoka's coronation, the year in which the edict was promulgated.

Bhattacharya had also sought support for his thesis from a *locus classicus* of Justin containing the following statement: "The author of the liberation was Sandrocottos... He having drawn together a band of robbers instigated the Indians to overthrow the existing government. When he was hereafter preparing to attack Alexander's prefects, an elephant of monstrous size approached him and received him on his back." Plutarch has also recorded, "Androcottos himself, who was but a youth, saw Alexander," the sum and substance of the deduction from these passages being that Androcottos became the king of Pataliputra after driving away the Macedonian garrisons from the Punjab. But Eudamos, one of the Macedonian prefects, was still lingering there. He did not leave India until 317. The liberation of the Punjab could not have been accomplished before that date. And if four years be accepted as the normal length of time required to complete the conquest of Magadha, there would be no incongruity in placing Chandragupta's accession in about 313 B.C.

However, as argued by Roy, Justin himself says that "having offended Alexander by his rashness, he (Chandragupta) saved himself by his swiftness of foot." This flight, according to Justin, occurred before Chandragupta gathered his army of mercenaries. It follows therefore that after his flight from Alexander's

camp, Chandragupta collected a powerful army and with its help overthrew Alexander's prefects. And Roy triumphantly concludes that the existence of Eudamos in the North-West cannot preclude the possibility of Chandragupta's accession to the Indian throne about 324 B.C.

A Lost Historian

Roy's next contribution to Indian history was "Trogu's Source: A lost (?) Historian of the Hellenistic East," which he read at the third session of the Indian History Congress, Calcutta, 1939, and which appears in its *Proceedings*, pp. 328-47. In this paper Roy differs from Tarn, who in his work *The Greeks in Bactria and India* claims to have brought to light what he terms, "Trogu's Source", meaning a lost author, the sole source Trogu Pompeius used for writing on Parthia and the Far East. This lost author, according to Tarn, knew much about India, had some knowledge of Jain and Buddhist literature and was acquainted with the *Mahābhārata*.

Roy's objection against Tarn's opinion that Trogu Pompeius drew his information about Parthia and the Far East from a sole source is that it is incredible that he left unutilised other sources available in his day. It is certain that Apollodorus (87 B.C.) was known in his times (20 B.C.—A.D. 9). One reason given by Tarn against the possibility of Trogu having drawn on Apollodorus is that Strabo (64 B.C.—A.D. 11)—who usually depends on Apollodorus—and Trogu have different accounts of the nomad conquest of Bactria. But the conflict between the two accounts is more apparent than real. For while Strabo enumerates the different ethnic groups responsible for that culmination, Trogu names the geographical regions whose inhabitants played a prominent part in the ruin of the Bactrian Greeks.

Tarn's claim for Trogu's Source's knowledge of Jaina literature is untenable, because the earliest Jaina works, viz. the canonical works were not put into writing before A.D. 454. And as for the Source's knowledge of Buddhism or Buddhist practices, it is farfetched to trace back the source of the story in the *Moralia* of Plutarch (who is indebted to Trogu's Source) of Menander's ashes being divided among the cities of his kingdom, each of which raised a stupa over its portion, to the Buddhist Book of the Great Decease. Even though this book also relates a similar story of the relics of the Buddha having been divided among eight peoples and enshrined under eight stupas, it need not have served as an incentive. True, Plutarch may have known Trogu's Source and utilized it. But Tarn misses the folklore element in the *Moralia* story. Fight over the corpse of the illustrious dead is a motif not of very rare occurrence in popular

tales. Witness for instance the legend relating to the fight over the dead body of Kabir. But is one justified, asks Roy, in tracing all such tales to the Buddhist *Book of the Great Decease*? Then again, the word 'mneme' used by Plutarch for monument is a general term signifying a building or a monument raised to the dead and has hardly any association with Buddhism.

As to the acquaintance of Trogus' Source with the *Mahābhārata*, the proof offered by Tam is too tenuous to deserve serious consideration. It is as follows: Ptolemy, VII, 1.6, indebted to Trogus' Source, calls the country between the Indus and the Ravi 'Pandovuon or Pandaouon'. The same word appears in the form of Panda in the *Bessarica* of Dionysius. They are the Pāṇḍava-Pāṇḍu of the *Mahābhārata*. They do not appear in later history but belong solely to the epic. In consequence, Ptolemy and Dionysius got the name from some Greek who knew the *Mahābhārata*.

The fallacy of Tam's argument, in the opinion of Roy, lies in the assumption that the Pāṇḍavas did not appear in history in the post-epic times and that the Pauravas occupying the region between the Jhelum and the Ravi were a different people. According to the epic the Pāṇḍavas were a branch of the Paurava family and were in control of the Chenab-Ravi region. They were in occupation of it in Alexander's time and they are represented in the Tibetan version of the *Vinaya Piṭaka*, *Mahāvagga*, VIII, 1, as harassing King Pushkarasarin of Taxila, a contemporary of the Buddha.

It is creditable to Roy that Prof. Max Cary of the University of London should have sent the following appreciation to him on reading his article: "I am a great admirer of Tam. ... But I admit that sometimes his evidence goes too far, and I believe by your careful reasoning you have fairly caught him out on the question of Trogus' Source. ... On the question of general method I quite agree with you that it is dangerous to assume that Trogus (or any other Greek or Roman writer) continuously drew upon a single source."

Arikamedu

It would appear from the bibliography of Roy's writings, meticulously prepared by Mr. T.K.G. Nair, his long-time admirer and friend, that the critique on Trogus' Source was followed by a study on the Nanda Dynasty. The paper was contributed to the fourth session of the Indian History Congress, 1940. It was, however, not published in its *Proceedings*. Nor is his paper "A Study on Encounter between Indian and Hellenistic Philosophy", contributed to the International Congress of Orientalists which met at New Delhi in 1964, published in its

Proceedings. He also made a study of the Buddhist influences which substantially modified the spirit and technique of the Graeco-Roman and early Christian art in the Near East. An article on his findings was published in 1956 under the caption "Impact of Buddhism on Western Art." It is, however, not known where it was published. The same is the case with regard to a study he prepared on the archaeological site at Arikamedu, (Pondicherry), suggesting for it, in opposition to Sir R.E. Mortimer Wheeler, a pre-Christian dating and ascribing the settlement to Alexandrian traders. Submitted to Prof. Max Cary for opinion, the latter wrote to say: "I do not hesitate to accept your interpretation of the Arikamedu site as against Wheeler's. The stratification surely dates back in its earlier levels to the B.C. period."⁹

Again in the fifties Roy contributed four important papers on Ancient India to the *Société Jean Bodin pour l'histoire comparative*, Brussels. These papers were "Civic Administration in Ancient India," "Social and Economic problems of Urban India", "Private Law in Ancient Indian Cities", and "Indian Women in Antiquity". My best efforts have failed to trace the first two papers.

Private Law in Ancient India

"Private Law in Ancient Indian Cities" appeared in the *Rescueils de la Société Jean Bodin*, Vol. VIII (1954) pp. 69-96. The evidence of law is staring us in the face at the very dawn of civilisation in India. The hoard of seals discovered at the various sites of the Harappa civilisation bespeak contractual transactions. The style of the residential houses conforming to a set pattern in every particular down to the size of the bricks employed in the buildings and the capacity of the pots used by the citizens would testify to the centralised character of the policy evolved in the cities. They witness a society governed by positive law and not merely customs.

Although no legal code of the Maurya empire has come down to us, there is no doubt of the prevalence of an elaborate legal system as India passed from the prehistoric to the historical period. For some such system must have formed the ultimate basis of the systems that came to dominate the various regions of India after the fall of the Mauryas. The later systems, represented first by the so-called Law Books or *Dharmasāstras* and later by the legal Digests or *Nibandhas*, show, despite their regional and unofficial origin, a basic unity in form and content which would remain unexplained "except on the hypothesis that they drew their inspiration from a definite body of juridical rules having supra-regional validity." Only a strong government like that of the Mauryas was capable of imposing a system of rules on a vast sub-continent with its multiplicity of rules, sects and local customs.

It was the declared object of the Mauryas to establish a *homonoia* (*samavaya*) by evolving a uniform system of law and legal procedure which would serve as a bond between the various atoms into which the society was divided. When Asoka declared, "All men are my children", he was not repeating an empty formula, but was announcing a new political philosophy. The effect of this philosophy was to accustom the Indians to a common set of rules of good-life and to fix them so firmly in their psyche that they could not be eradicated even after the disruption of the empire. In consequence, much of the secular legislation found in the post-Mauryan Law Books was of Mauryan origin, deriving its authentication from the positive law evolved during their rule. "The so-called Law Book of Manu (2nd century A.D.), for instance, was extensively drawn upon by the compendium ascribed to Narada c. A.D. 500), which, moreover, based its claim to recognition on the fact of its having been but an abridgement of Manu. Brihaspati—a work of the 6th century A.D.—not only bases itself entirely on Manu but makes the bold assertion that whatever law or practice deviated from Manu was to be regarded as void. That this was not a mere pious wish of a private legist would be evident from an official statement in a land grant of the 6th century A.D., issued by the Valabhi King Dharasena II attesting the acceptance of Manu's compendium as the code of the Valabhi State since the beginning of that century. The work of Yājñavalkya, which was in the main a rehash effected of Manu in the light of the changes that had taken place since his time, was destined for even a more successful career. The famous Mitakshara, the legal digest officially compiled under the Chalukya King Vikramāditya VI of the Deccan (A.D. 1075-1127), was but an expanded version of Yājñavalkya, which soon became the standard work not only in the Deccan but at Banaras and in greater part of Northern India." The Law Books admit King's commands as well as local customs such as those affecting family relations, inheritance, property, contract, in a word, all the legal questions that arise in social life, as sources of law. However, for Manu as for the Hellenic philosophers the King was but a god in the human shape. According to Yājñavalkya, the rules framed by social or economic associations were valid as long as they were in harmony with the King's law. Brihaspati and Kātyāyana declared that the King's law took precedence of not only local usages and customs but even canon law. The doctrine was in keeping with the imperial tradition going back to Maurya times. While dealing with the law and customs of the many peoples that had been gathered into the empire after the Kalinga War, Asoka boldly declared it to be his policy to respect only that part of the local law which was not repugnant to the general law of the State. The inevitable result of this policy was the emergence of a legal koine, which even after the disappearance of the Maurya empire continued to serve the needs of the States that arose on its ruins and became the subject matter of the Brahmanical Law Books.

Among family relations, marriage was given considerable attention by the

Hindu legists. Economically, it was a means to get as many male children as possible as workers for the household. Religiously, it was the only mode of ensuring offer of sacrifices to the manes by the male issues, the earliest Law Books giving recognition even to unions resulting from purchase, abduction and rape, forms disapproved in later legal literature. There was no freedom of marriage except in approved forms: arrangement by parents of a virgin before the attainment of puberty, economic restrictions exercising a deterrent effect on any other form. The desertion of a wife was considered a crime equal to theft, for which a large amount had to be paid as fine. But the husband could repudiate a wife when adulterous connection had led to the birth of a child, or where a wife has cut herself from the family for good, or is of choleric temper, wasteful and brings about abortion. He could stop intercourse with her if she gave birth to daughters only or behaved unbecomingly. But the woman was not entirely devoid of rights. She owned and could dispose of certain forms of property coming under rights. She owned and could dispose of presents received from her parents and relatives, her *peculia*. These included presents received from her husband, alimony and earnings by her own labour. According to Brihaspati she could even inherit the entire property of her husband in the event of his dying without a son and provided that he was not living in a joint family.

As in the case of women so in other respects also, the family law, according to modern standards, had, in the words of Roy, "crude and refined ideas jostling with each other". The *pater familias* enjoyed unassailable authority over the family. According to Nārada, he rules his family as a king rules his subjects. His power ceases only if there is reasonable doubt about his mental sanity. He could do whatever he liked with his sons, even sell them, according to earlier texts, though this is forbidden by later ones, and he could not dispose of the family property, and expulsion of an innocent son was a culpable offence.

The law of property, however, showed a greater subtlety of conception. There is a marked tendency in the legal texts to distinguish not only between ownership and possession but between various aspects of both. According to Gautama the sources of ownership include inheritance, purchase, partition, seizure of unclaimed property, finding and acquisition of livelihood through legitimate means. Much thought is given by the legists to the concept of usucaption, and the general rule was accepted with notable exceptions that the lawful owner forfeits his right over property if it is occupied by another and though present, he does not raise any claim within ten years. But for usucaption to take place the property claimed had to be in undisturbed possession of the claimant. The movable property was sharply distinguished from the immovable which included besides estates and plantations, fields, woods, houses, etc., and also rents accruing from them and income from a donation.

"The ownership of landed estates", in the words of Roy, "appears to have been composed of three distinct levels of rights. First, we have the right of the cultivator tenant who is entitled to five-sixth of its produce; above him is the so-called proprietor who usually holds from a political authority, royal or seignorial, and whose rights vary according to the terms on which he has acquired his proprietorship, but usually he is entitled to no more than one-sixth of the produce and any other royal or seignorial dues from the soil owned by him. At the top we have the royal or the seignorial owner the ultimate reversionary of every form of property, without whose permission no real estate can be transferred from one proprietor to another. The extant land grants clearly indicate that such transfers usually mean no more than the alienation of the king's or the seignor's share of the income from the land, but not the tenancy rights."

The most common type of property was that held by the joint family, and it included not only movables but also land, houses, and other forms of immovables. Earnings of the members went to the common pool, if made with the help of the family property. The joint family included, besides parents and children, brothers and step-brothers, sometimes ascendants and descendants down to many generations. The head of the family could not dispose of the estate or any part thereof without the consent of the family members and had to consult them in regard to acts relating to income and expenditure. Economic changes, however, compelled the replacement of these views by more modern ideas. According to these ideas the buyer was required to test a property before taking possession, while the seller was held responsible if he used false weights, artificially concealed any defect, or delivered a different article from the one bargained for. Institutions of public utility were usually maintained with gifts of money and grant of income from lands, houses, shops, plantations, etc.

Connected with the law of property is that of succession, and the only form of succession thoroughly dealt with in the Digests was intestate succession, the heirs being in the following order: sons born in wedlock, then the secondary sons including the adopted, then the sons and then their sons. On their failure the legacy devolves on the agnates, which is the view generally held, though a revolutionary note is sounded by Yājñavalkya and Nārada investing the daughter with the right of inheritance in the absence of sons.

There were elaborate rules governing the obligations arising from renting a house, building or a shop, all of which were included in the category of hire. Failure to return a rented property on a fixed date had to be compensated for adequately. Injury to property had to be made good except in the case of *force majeure*. Transporters were responsible and punishable for damage caused to the cargo by their own negligence. Employees failing to discharge their obligations were not to receive any wages, or had to return double the amount receiv-

ed. But the employer who refused to pay the stipulated wages without reason may be compelled to make the payment. Usury was decried, though Manu stipulates the maximum rate of interest of 60% per annum which could be exceeded when a particular risk was involved. The only guarantees of debt were pledge and surety, hypothecation being unknown. Usable pledges were to be restored as soon as the yield from them equalled twice the amount of the principal. Unusable pledges could be converted into usable pledges, and both became forfeit as soon as the interest in arrears reached the amount of the principal. The sureties could be held responsible not only for the payment of the debt, but also for delivering the assets of the debtor and for his capacity to pay.

As to judicial procedure, the first item in the legal process was the plaint, which had to be set down in writing, together with the particulars about the place, date and parties to the suit. It was subjected to a preliminary examination, and could be summarily dismissed by the judge, if found defective. If the plaint was accepted, the judge issued summons to the defendant. The latter's answer, also in writing, could be of four kinds; denial, admission, a special plea or reference to a former judgment. Then followed the recording of evidence, oral and documentary, and the citing of witnesses, direct and indirect, the latter being called for the authentication of the legal transaction under dispute. The verdict was drawn up in writing and handed over to the victorious party under the royal seal and the disputed properties under custody were returned to this party together with the profits arising from them.

This in brief was the private law, in the evolution of which the cities played an important part. The elaborately complex law relating to the transfer of property and contractual obligations, features indissolubly bound up with the mercantile class, were essentially urban innovations.

The papers on ancient urban life created such a stir among the audiences in Brussels that Professor John Gillisen, Secretary, Société Jean Bodin, wrote in conveying the thanks of the Society that the reading "created very great interest as much by the novelty of the synthesis attempted as by the precision of details. It is a contribution very precious and original... Your contributions have made possible a better understanding of the history of urban institutions by reason of the particular interest you have created in the development of Indian cities."

Woman in Ancient India

"Indian Women in Antiquity," which appeared in the *Recueils de la Société*

Jean Bodin, Vol. X (1956) traces the vicissitudes of the greatness and decay womanhood has undergone in Ancient India. Given the exalted mystical significance of womanhood, it was not possible for the Rigvedic society to consign woman to an ignoble status. It was but natural that a poet should rise in such a society in course of time bold enough to conceive the first principle of the universe in the image of a woman. Such a concept is found in a song put in the mouth of the mysterious being, Vāk, who calls herself the queen of the universe, presiding over all the forces of nature and parading the whole earth and entire heaven.

Yet the discovery of this subtle relation between the primeval principle of the universe and feminine nature could in actual fact do little to stem the surging mysogyny of the post-Vedic Law Books. The fact is paradoxical but not beyond explanation. The Indian mind could not free itself from the primitive objection that women, being deeply embedded in nature, needed to be conquered and controlled.

There were also other factors helping in the subjection of women. There was, for instance, the belief that for viability beyond the grave a person needed periodical offerings of food and drink by his descendants, and so steps were taken against the falsification of descent. Rules were made penalizing feminine infidelity, and virginity in the bride came to be regarded as an essential requirement for marriage. Before long, marriage before puberty became an established practice as also succession to property in the male line.

There were economic factors aiding and abetting the ouster of women from her premier position in society. The invention of the plough, changing agriculture from plot-cultivation to large-scale farming, dislodged her from the key-crafts over which she had wielded control: "the chemistry of pottery and the physics of spinning, the mechanics of the loom and the botany of flax and cotton." Until at last in the age of the Sūtras the doctrine came to be accepted for the first time that woman is incapable of owning herself or property. Her subjection to man was complete.

Woman was saved, however, by the emergence of two civilized forces: a centralized monarchy and an urban *bourgeoisie*. The first force was brought into play by the Maurya rulers. Their egalitarian policy succeeded in making the King's law override all local and tribal customs and placing the *bourgeoisie* on a footing of equality with other powerful elements in the social fabric. The partnership between monarchy and the *bourgeoisie* brought into being a new urban economy of immense benefit to women.

In this economy there was no place for any exclusive legal system of the priestly classes, the legacy of the earliest tribal and agricultural society. Women took their due place, engaging in trade and business. What helped this culmination was the King's law which in Aśoka's own words succeeded in establishing the equality of all before the law. The family-law, for instance, of the Theravāda conceded to women the highest possible rights. The inscriptions of the period from 2nd century B.C. to 4th century A.D. record donations by women donors of independent means, none of them being under the tutelage of a husband, father or any other relation.

From the end of the 5th century women cease to figure prominently in the epigraphical records, their disappearance coinciding with the decline of centralized monarchy and the decay of urban economy. Both these developments were due to the collapse of India's foreign trade and the consequent ruination of the trading and producing classes. The result was the replacement of the King's law with priestly legal codes which sealed for ever the fate of Indian womanhood.

These being the factors which affected the status of Indian women, Roy traces the rise and fall of Indian womanhood in antiquity under the heads: woman married and unmarried, woman in public life, woman in private life, woman in criminal law and woman in social and economic life.

To take then first the question of the status of the married woman. The wife in the Rigveda is given an honoured place in the home as the mistress of the household and as the mother of her husband's heirs. Contrasted with her, the lot of the unmarried girl who grows old in her father's house is unhappy. She could not have a home of her own except in the rare case of her father dying sonless. Perhaps her disabilities were few under urban economy (3rd century B.C. to 5th century A.D.), and some of the donors figuring in the inscriptions, as said above, may have been unmarried women. Spinsters no doubt joined the religious sisterhoods, and the latter, whether Buddhist, Jain or any other creed, commanded universal respect. Members of these sisterhoods not only held personal estates but could dispose of them as they wished. Of the 136 donative records, found on the Bārhut railings (2nd century B.C.) no less than 16 are grants by members of the sisterhoods. In contrast, the position of the widow was one of unrelieved misery. Her very sight was said to bring misfortune. Her remarriage was simply unthinkable; and if contracted, a remarried widow was never allowed the status of a wedded wife. Widows may have enjoyed a life of comparative ease during the period of centralized monarchy, seeing that the period from Aśoka to Skanda Gupta is conspicuous by its absence of widow-burning. The practice became widely prevalent after the breakdown of the *bourgeois* economy, which brought about a general degradation in the status of women. Curiously, the courtesan occupied the same place of honour in classical

India as did the *hetærae* in Periclean Athens. But the lot of the common prostitute, unknown before the time of Kālidāsa, was unenviable.

About the part played by women in public affairs, Rigvedic women would seem to have enjoyed the right to attend public assemblies and till about the end of the 5th century A.D. women took lively interest in corporate activities aiming at public good. There are a few records of the 2nd century A.D. showing women holding offices like those of Bhoji, Mahābhoji or Mahārathini, terms which suggest elective functionaries of villages or districts. Women held the offices of royal door-keepers and *mirabile dictu* even of commander-in-chief. There are brilliant examples in the 4th century A.D. of able queens like Prabhāvatī Gupta who ruled over the Vākātaka empire and of the Lichchāvī princess, Kumāradevi, who ruled conjointly with her husband Chandra Gupta I. Queens fill the pages of the history of Kashmir and Orissa. We meet with women of exceptional ability the Śīla Bhaṭṭārīka of the Rāshṭrakūṭa family whose writ ran throughout the Deccan and Maila Devi and Ketakadevi of the Western Chālukyas of Kalyāṇi.

Roy views the position of woman in private law in regard to conjugal relationship, parental authority and inheritance. Although child marriage is unknown in the Vedic age, it is advocated as the norm in post-Vedic times. In the classical age, however, the norm was marriage after puberty, but by the 11th century child marriage again became the rule. Marriage was arranged by the parents of the couple. Strict rules were observed as to the prohibited degrees on the side of both the father and the mother. Ban on marriage within the *gotras* is found only in the Sūtras and the Smritis. Marriage was indissoluble. Hindu law knew no divorce. Adultery was the only ground for abandoning a wife. But views differed on the subject thanks to the prevalence of the primitive belief that a woman is not rendered impure by sexual intercourse; her impurity is washed away by her monthly flow. She could be punished with expulsion only if she became pregnant. But the authority of the husband over his wife was unbounded. Even if she was superseded, she had no right to leave the husband's house. The law emphasized the duty of absolute obedience of the wife to the husband. She had of course the right to maintenance, notwithstanding her faults.

In Vedic society the father and the mother appear to have jointly constituted parental authority. The mother was gradually dislodged from this position. She ceased to have any say in the education of the children or their upbringing, and any voice in arranging their marriage. The evidence is conflicting as to whether guardianship of the children devolved on her on her husband's demise.

The Vedic idea that the husband and the wife were the joint owners of the

family property was replaced by the Brahmanical view that the wife, herself being a chattel, could not own anything. But the economy and political forces brought about an improvement in women's position, and she came to acquire an absolute authority over her *peculium*. It is, however, difficult to determine the share of the woman in the management of the family property. There are many examples in the epigraphical records of women giving away both movable and real estates, singly as well as jointly with their husbands. And there is no indication of prior permission having been obtained by the wife from the *pater familias*. But the Hindu law, apathetic as it was to females, disallowed inheritance by the daughter even when the father died sonless. Later, however, she was deemed an heir after the son and the widow. And she had unassailable right to the mother's *peculium*. A widow was entitled only to maintenance. But there were legists who held that she was entitled to a share as well equivalent to a son's portion. This reverted to the agnates of her husband after her death, since a widow enjoyed only a life-interest in the inherited property.

Criminal law governing women centred mainly around sexual offences: adultery and abortion. And in all such cases the masculine accomplice was held equally responsible. We learn from an inscription of the time of Āhavamalla of the Deccan (A.D. 992) that amputation of the nose was the penalty imposed on an adulteress, while her accomplice was put to death. The Law Books show a distinct Brahmanical bias in grading the punishment according to the caste of the offender. Thus, for committing adultery with the wife of an Aryan, a Shudra had to lose his organ, while a Brahman offender was let off with a fine of 500 coins if the woman was a willing partner, and with double that amount if she was forced against her will. Severer punishment was in store for a Kshatriya and a Vaishya, involved in similar cases. The destruction of the foetus, committed by a woman or a man, was equally punishable with banishment. But capital punishment awaited a woman, murdering her child or her husband.

Mortimer Wheeler

The appointment of Mortimer Wheeler, an eminent British archaeologist, as Director General ushered in a new era.

His first task was that of re-studying Indus cities with a view to determining their sociological character. His discovery of the flood-worn remains of a citadel exploded the prevailing myth of the non-military character of the Indus cities. To establish inter-relationship between India and the West with the aid of the Roman coins and other material that would surface while digging, he selected for the purpose Arikamedu. We have already referred to the interpretation by Roy of that material. Another service of Wheeler was the transformation of "the entire character of the excavation methods followed in India by subordinating them to stratigraphical control and analysis conformably to the best international standard." His tenure of office as Director General is one of the most eventful in the annals of Indian archaeology.

Roy had pressed so much material into the production of the book and estimated with critical acumen the services of each and every scholar who had anything to do with Indian archaeology that the book evoked the following tribute from Professor Tucci: "I have perused your book with great interest admiring your achievement in collecting such a mass of material in so small a compass."¹⁰

Modern India

Knowing as he did the National Archives as the palm of his hand, Roy possessed first-hand knowledge of British India. He compiled an entirely new study of the Black Hole episode on the basis of hitherto unpublished and unknown material, collected by him from the Fort St. George archives, India Office and the Dutch archives. This study was awaiting publication. He wrote a biographical study of the Rani of Jhansi on the basis of her own correspondence in Marathi and in English translations as well as other contemporary records. He prepared a disquisition on the Gandhi-Irvin Pact on the basis of new material available among the late Home Department records; and his work on Nain Singh, the famous explorer responsible for placing Tibet and greater part of Asia on the map, was nearing completion. Mr. T.K.G. Nair, however, searched for these works in vain. I also regret I have not been able to obtain a copy of his paper "A Critique of the Sources of the Economic History of India during the Eighteenth and the Nineteenth Century," contributed by him to the Economic History Conference held under the auspices of the Delhi School of Economics in

1962. He has presented in this paper an assessment of the value of the Survey of India's memoirs as a first hand source of economic history. Roy's collaboration with Verrier Elwin, the noted anthropologist, is acknowledged by the latter in his books *The Bondo Highlander*, *Myths of Mid India*, and *Religion of an Indian tribe*.

Among his published papers "The Surat Firman", contributed to the Prof. C.S. Srinivasachari *Sixty-first Birthday Celebration Volume* (Madras, 1950), pp 225-31 is of interest because the Imperial Mughal Grant, of which Roy speaks, constitutes the first recognition by the strongest military power in India of the British naval supremacy in the Indian seas. As the British empire in India was essentially the creation of the British sea power, the document may be regarded as marking the beginning of that empire. It is however curious that none of the writers who have referred to the document has a clear notion about either its date or the circumstances leading to its issue. Roy attempts to ascertain these circumstances with the help of the documents of the period. The documents show that on 10 October 1612 the terms of the treaty presented by Captain Best on behalf of the Company were agreed to by the Governor of Ahmedabad after three days' conference. These terms laid down the conditions for English trade in the cities of Surat, Ahmedabad, Goga or in any other part or parts of the country within the Great Mughal's dominions. The confirmation of the articles, however, did not arrive within the stipulated time. In the meanwhile, the Portuguese sent four galleons to dispute the passage of the English ships. But in the naval encounter that ensued the English ships put the Portuguese squardorn to flight. The success of the English pleased the Mughals. The farman was received by the English on 20 February 1613.

Prāṇpuri

In his article "Travels and Adventures of a Hindu Mystic", *East and West* (Rome), Vol. VI (1955-56), pp. 332-34, under the nom de plume of Ulysses Young, Roy recounts the astonishing story of Pushpaparamahansa Prāṇpuri, popularly known as Urdhvbahu Tapasvi (the ascetic with uplifted arms). This was a name earned by him by reason of his holding his arms in a fixed position over his head. Born of Rajput parents in or about 1743, Prāṇpuri secretly left from under his parental roof at the age of 9. While at Bithur, he joined a Hindu ascetic who taught him the tenets of his sacred lore. At ten he decided to renounce the world to lead a life of self-mortification which, he believed, would bring him nearer to God. He took a vow to be perpetually on his feet, for a period of twelve years neither sitting nor lying down to rest. But he did not like the idea of spending his time rooted to the same spot. He would rather be peripatetic, desiring as he did to replenish his mind with knowledge of new

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Roy had pressed so much material into the production of the book and estimated with critical acumen the services of each and every scholar who had anything to do with Indian archaeology that the book evoked the following tribute from Professor Tucci: "I have perused your book with great interest admiring your achievement in collecting such a mass of material in so small a compass."¹⁰

Modern India

Knowing as he did the National Archives as the palm of his hand, Roy possessed first-hand knowledge of British India. He compiled an entirely new study of the Black Hole episode on the basis of hitherto unpublished and unknown material, collected by him from the Fort St. George archives, India Office and the Dutch archives. This study was awaiting publication. He wrote a biographical study of the Rani of Jhansi on the basis of her own correspondence in Marathi and in English translations as well as other contemporary records. He prepared a disquisition on the Gandhi-Irvin Pact on the basis of new material available among the late Home Department records; and his work on Nain Singh, the famous explorer responsible for placing Tibet and greater part of Asia on the map, was nearing completion. Mr. T.K.G. Nair, however, searched for these works in vain. I also regret I have not been able to obtain a copy of his paper "A Critique of the Sources of the Economic History of India during the Eighteenth and the Nineteenth Century," contributed by him to the Economic History Conference held under the auspices of the Delhi School of Economics in

dispatches to the Governor General in Calcutta. They were delivered to Warren Hastings.

Prānpuri was universally revered as much for his saintly character as for the fascinating tales of his travels which he related with gusto. Among those who cultivated his friendship were the Governor General himself, the Tashi Lama of Tibet, the King of Nepal, Ali Ibrahim Khan of Banaras, Jonathan Duncan who later became Governor of Bombay and Samuel Turner, the explorer.

Rammohan Roy

Under the same pen-name of Ulysses Young, there appears another article of Roy in *East and West*, Vol. V (1954-55) pp. 300-03, entitled "Rammohan Roy". In this article he inquires into the reasons for the apathy among his countrymen today to Rammohan's teachings. They are to be sought, according to Roy, in the novelty of the doctrines he preached and the revolutionary character of the reforms he advocated. If Rammohan was far in advance of his countrymen in his own day, Roy reasons, he is scarcely less so now: "already one hears talks on the need to go back to the Vedic age and resuscitate its vanished glories." Rammohan found the most effective civilizing force in the brotherhood of inter-dependence of individuals no less than of nations, and never in the isolation of independence. "When we have to depend", he used to say, "by the very condition of our existence upon all things and all beings in nature, is not the fiery love of national independence a chimera? In society, individuals are constantly driven by their weakness to seek help from their neighbours, above all if the neighbour happens to be stronger than they. Why then should a nation have the absurd pride of not depending on others?" This of course did not mean that he wanted any nation to subject itself to a reactionary power.

Further he saw in the political subjection of India to Britain the possibility of enrichment of life, an advantage which escaped his countrymen and the conquerors alike. "Conquest", he used to declare, "is very rarely an evil when the conquering people are more civilized than the conquered, because the former bring to the latter the benefits of civilization." He once told the great French scientist Jaquemont that in the blind patriotism of his youth as a young man he hated Europe, the mistress of his native land, and detested the English and above all their gifts. *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes!* But since that day he had learnt more about the benefits which have followed the establishment of the British power and had come to regard it as beneficial to India. "National independence," he remarked, "is not an absolute good. The object, the goal, so to say, of society is to secure the happiness of the greatest possible number, and when left to itself a nation cannot attain this object when it does not contain

within itself the principles of future progress, it is better for it that it should be guided by the example and even by the authority of a conquering people who are more civilized."

He also bore a high regard for the democratic principles in Islam and the unique ethical ideals he found in Christianity. "I presume to think," he once said, "Christianity if properly inculcated has a greater tendency to improve the moral, social and political state of mankind than any other religious system." Rammohan's ultimate aspiration, adds Roy, was to see India fully Anglicized, speaking English and turned Christian, and asks: "How many of his countrymen will find this ideal worth striving for?"

Another reason for Rammohan's unpopularity is his over emphasis of religion and the store he laid by the ancient texts. But he was capable of complete detachment from religious texts as for instance when he deposed evidence before the parliamentary committee in 1832. Comments Roy: "Here he hadn't to descend to the mental level of his opponents but plead for his objective, purely on principle and from considerations of public good. He declared the Sanskrit system of education as best calculated to keep the country in darkness." But he found in religion the most potent civilizing force and most of his outward religious activities were conducted to carry through his practical aims. He had realized the importance of religion as a factor in the development of human civilisation. "He understood," adds Roy, "that the right course was not to suppress it, but refine and simplify it; to use it as a means to serve social equality and fraternity as well as political emancipation. His Brahmo Samaj was a noble effort to translate into concrete reality his philosophy of universal humanism which was arrived at by a synthesis of the essentials in all great systems of thought in the world."

And for ever ahead of his times, Rammohan was already thinking of a United Nations Organisation capable of solving the problems of international politics. Accordingly, writing to Talleyrand in 1832, he asserted that cosmopolitanism is not an utopian ideal, but a practical programme capable of translation into reality. And he profoundly observed: "The accurate deductions of scientific research lead to the conclusion that all mankind are but one great family of which the numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches.... (There is) supreme need to encourage and facilitate human intercourse in every manner by removing all impediments to it in order to promote the reciprocal advantage and enjoyment of the whole human race." As a practical means by which this goal can be reached, he suggested the establishment of a congress composed of equal number of members from the Parliament of each country, a congress to which all matters of political or economic difference were to be submitted, the decision of the majority being binding on all. The Chairman of

this body was to be elected by each nation in turn and the place of the meeting was to vary with each year. In this proposal Roy finds a practical solution by which the larger needs of an international society could be harmoniously reconciled with the sentiment of geographical nationalism.

A second article on Rammohan Roy appeared in *The Hindustan Standard* (Calcutta) 27 September, 1955, under the caption "Rammohan Roy and the Unity of Mankind." I regret I have no access to this paper in Bombay.

Tatya Tope and the Mutiny

"Tatya Tope" is a biographical essay. Roy contributed it to the periodical *March of India* in 1957. It was a by-product of his larger work on the Rani of Jhansi. It was based on Tatya's own writings available at the National Archives among the Foreign and Political records as well as the records of the rebel government seized by the British army at Kalpi.

Tatya was one of the finest characters of the Movement of 1857. He started as a humble employee of the last Peshwa's household, with hardly any political experience or military training; he rose equal to the military challenge and emerged as one of the most formidable military leaders. Tatya along with Nana, his master, had been compelled to join the mutineers against their will. But once they threw in their lot with the latter, they decided to offer the British as stiff a fight as possible.

When Nana's army was defeated by Havelock in July, the initiative passed to Tatya. From that moment he began performing prodigies of valour. Having persuaded the celebrated Gwalior Contingent to join him, he appeared at Kanpur from his base of operations at Kalpi. At Kanpur he inflicted a crushing defeat on the enemy forces under Windham. Though the losses were retrieved by Campbell, the British found it difficult to dislodge him from the ground he had chosen. Kalpi gave him a tremendous edge over the enemy. "Kalpi on the right bank of the Jumna, in the hands of the rebels," wrote Sir Hugh Rose, a competent judge of the situation, "prevented the concentration of the British armies of the West with those of the East of India. It also exposed to attack from the line of the Jumna the army engaged in the operations against the insurgents in the Doab, the line of the Ganges, Oudh and Rohilkhand. And as long as Kalpi was rebel, so long the enemy had it in their power to say that East and West of India might be British, but the pivot of the centre was theirs."

To earn the sympathy of the people it was necessary to incite them against the British; and so Tatya issued a proclamation to the princes and people of

India that Nana was solicitous of defending Hinduism and Islam against the enemies of the faith of the people and of restoring to the princes their respective dominions. But the defection of the Raja of Charkhari delayed Tatya. This delay prevented him from blocking the entry of the British troops into the heart of the rebel country and investing the fort of Jhansi. Jhansi fell on April 5, and Sir Hugh, succeeding in out-generalling Tatya, compelled him to evacuate Kalpi. This was his biggest set-back. Tatya wanted to make a stand before Gwalior, but in the engagements which followed he was disastrously defeated. With his following reduced to a handful, he escaped into Rajputana. At Tonk the troops of the Nawab joined him *en masse*. He overran Jhalawar and was about to storm Indore when he was compelled by General Michel to deflect his course towards Baroda. He was intercepted by British troops there and he withdrew to Banswara. Driven to bay, he fought a losing battle at Sikar in January 1859; and though at every turn he baffled the attempts of the British to capture him, he could no longer elude the enemy. He sought asylum with his erstwhile friend, Man Singh of Narwar. But the latter handed him over to the British. At a court martial held at Sipri, he was condemned to be hanged, and the sentence was executed on April 18.

Tatya's conduct was dignified to the very end. "I only obeyed," he declared, "in all things that I did, my master, the Nana's orders upto the capture of Kalpi, and afterwards those of Rao Saheb (his nephew). I have nothing to state except that I have had nothing to do with the murder of any European, men, women, or children: neither had I at any time given orders for any one to be hanged." He could not be charged with lese-majesty. He was never a British subject. He was fighting an alien power under the orders of his own sovereign.

Roy has done justice to Tatya without being carried away by the emotion with which the whole country was charged at the time he was writing this article, the hundredth anniversary of the great uprising.

Roy applies the same cold logic to the causes of the uprising and its nature in his review of J.A.B. Palmer's *The Mutiny Outbreak at Meerat in 1857* (Cambridge, 1966) in *IESHR*, Vol. XI (1974), pp. 314-26. "There has been no weakening of erudite theorizing on the problem," he says, "yet the fact remains that most of the theories in the field tend to fight shy of some of the basic questions regarding that momentous event." For one thing, the theory which finds the most potent cause in the sepoys' horror at the prospect of using the new cartridge, reportedly greased with cow's or pig's fat, fails to explain why on the outbreak of the revolt the same sepoys did not hesitate to use the self-same cartridge. Nor did its use, which had become the established practice, act as a deterrent on the flow of recruits to the Bengal Army as a result of the agitation long carried on in its usual recruiting grounds, such as Oudh. As to the other

grievances of the Sepoys, besides the cartridge which according to another view, was only the tip of the iceberg, there is not a single mention, Roy says, of any grievance in the voluminous correspondence which the sepoys carried out before the outbreak of the 'Mutiny' and also thereafter. It is also fashionable to describe the outbreak as a peasant rising, fighting to recover their long-lost rights as a social class. The argument is untenable for the simple reason that for the most part the Sepoys were Brahmans. The Brahmans and other higher castes generally "disdained to handle the plough". They preferred service in the army to manual work of any kind. What is more, if the movement was a peasant upsurge, a part of the energy of the sepoys would have been devoted to liquidate the landlord class with the extinction of the British control over the areas where they operated. Land-grabbing there was, but it was on the part of the landlords trying to make good the losses they had suffered thanks to the erstwhile British settlement. In fact some of the peasants, as in Oudh, actually went out of their way to return to their former landlords the very holdings over which they had acquired ownership rights.

The Sepoy revolt therefore cannot be identified as a popular revolution. As regards the villagers that rallied round the standards of the taluqdars, they were either their former retainers owing them personal loyalty or their clansmen tied to them by strong bonds of kinship. "Such men followed their leaders," says Roy, "recking little of the question whether the latter were on the British side or on that of the rebels. On the other hand, the villagers, who on their own took part in the killing and the plundering that marked the course of the rebellion almost in every case, consisted of common brigands or predatory classes like the Gujars, the Pasis or the Mewatis. These classes abhorred any kind of orderly government and were ever ready to fight in any cause where there was a prospect of reaping. In pursuit of this instinct, they played no partisan's part, but with the utmost impartiality robbed alike the straggling European running for his life or the sepoy carrying off his booty."

1857 in India is sometimes compared to 1789. "A yawning gulf of qualitative difference," declares Roy "separates a crowd which assembles only for the purpose of fishing in troubled waters from one genuinely inspired by a profound revolutionary impulse. There is no evidence whatsoever that either brigands or predatory classes provided revolutionary militants or sympathisers in the French Revolution of the 18th century."

Economic History

Roy could not help being drawn to economic history which was beginning to claim the attention of some of the best minds in India. Apart from the paper he

read at the Economic History Conference under the auspices of the Delhi School of Economics, to which reference has already been made, one of his first attempts in this direction was his contribution to the Asian History Congress, Delhi in 1961, entitled "From the Ganga to the Volga—the History of an Ancient Trade Route." An ancient route, connecting people "nourished by the Divine Ganga with the races favoured by the mighty Volga," has been described by classical writers, who came to India in Alexander's train or shortly thereafter. Spanning the 1156 mile distance from Pataliputra to Taxila, the road ran from the latter city to Bactria (Balkh), then a great international trading centre. This was the trysting place of caravan routes from different parts of Asia and Europe. One of these routes led to the left bank of the river Icarus which flows into the Oxus. Here the merchants would get into ships, which would carry them down the Caspian Sea and via the river Cyrus in Baku to the source of the river Phasis and so to the Black Sea, and offer their wares for sale to the people of South Russia. The remaining merchants would proceed to the north-western shores of the Caspian Sea where they would be met by other people who would carry their wares to the Greek cities of the Crimea and to the interior of Russia.

The existence of this route, described by Patrocles and Aristobulus who followed Alexander and confirmed by Varro (116-27 B.C.) has been doubted by some modern historians like Tarn on the ground that at present the Oxus joins the Aral and has no connection with the Caspian. The vicissitudes of the Oxus have been summarized by Kropotkin in his famous study, *The Old Bed of the Oxus*. Suffice it to say that Arrian, consular legate under Hadrian (A.D. 76-138), not only testifies to the fact of the Oxus flowing into the Caspian but speaks also of many small forts whose object was obviously to protect the trade passing from the Caspian to the Phasis and vice-versa. Rome was trying to control the Caspian route with a view to attracting the overland trade from India, over several items of which India exercised a virtual monopoly: silk and silken fabric, figured textiles and diverse kinds of wares made of cotton, spices and medicinal plants like the Rhubarb, called in antiquity 'Rha-Barbarum' (Rha, the ancient name for the river Volga, and Barbarum from Barbarike, a place in Sind), jewellery and items of toreutic art.

Along with the usual articles of trade, Indian artistic influences reached distant climes thanks to this well-worn route. As an instance in point, Roy draws attention to the find of a gold-front plaque of a triangular shape representing the Indo-Iranian Sun-god, seen full-face in a chariot with horses separated in two groups in order to show the epiphany of the god. The earliest representation of the Sun-god with the same iconographic features is on a Bodh Gaya railing of the second century B.C. The concept which is found in the Vedas was

appropriated by Buddhism and carried as far west as the South Russian steppes. Another particularly Indian feature displayed by the plaque is the portrayal of figures in simple elevation in open violation of the classical rule of perspective.

Roy also traces a characteristic Indian influence in the magnificent religious art that sprang in Russia in the Middle Ages. This feature is the enlargement of the outstanding figure to a scale far greater than that of the figures surrounding it. Other features are "the use of the vertical perspective in the distribution of the volumes in space, the almost geometrical mingling up of human figures with the objects constituting their background, and the preference of the frontal to the lateral pose." These features are beyond the conception of the classical artist.

Roy next delved into the source material for the economic history of the Ceded Districts. I am deeply grateful to Professor Mrs. Dharma Kumar of the Delhi School of Economics for her kind courtesy in giving me information about the monograph embodying this material, which she deservedly terms "an outstanding work of Indian scholarship". "At his death," she writes, "Sourin Roy had nearly completed an annotated edition of select materials on the economy of the Ceded Districts (1800-1827). The major part of these are two surveys, one by Thomas Munro between 1802 and 1806, and the other by Colin Mackenzie and his trained assistants between 1809 and 1814. This material was supplemented by materials culled from the correspondence between the Madras Government and the Court of Directors, the proceedings of the Government of Madras, and of the regional collectorates. The copious notes written by Roy are marked by the meticulousness, depth and range of his scholarship, and are invaluable to all historians of South India. It is a tragedy that he could not complete the biographical notes on officials...."

Of a piece with the material brought out in this work was a "Note" he published under the caption: "A Rare Document on Delhi Wheat-prices 1763-1835" in *IESHR*, Vol. IV (1972), pp. 91-99. Professor W.S. Jevons had been struck by the periodicity with which commercial crisis occurred in England at an interval of 10 or 10½ years and was wondering if this regularity could have natural causes. By 1875 he had collected enough evidence to show that all known instances of crises fell into a regular series of decennial cycles. It was remarkable that there was a close coincidence between these cycles and the sun-spot periods as calculated by meteorologists like Lamont and Brown. What now remained to be proved was the causal character of the coincidence. This had already been attempted by Sir William Herschel, while Carrington had also done the same but without detecting any coincidence. Undeterred, Jevons reasoned that solar influence which is disguised in Europe may show off in other

latitudes and turned to India as likely to fulfil the requirement. He had already been impressed by the Hunterian theory of the periodicity of Indian famines leading him to inquire into the possibility of finding a correlation between the years of scarcity in India and those of depression in Europe. When, therefore, in March 1879, he lighted upon a table of prices covering the entire period of 1763-1835, in a paper by Rev. Robert Everest, published in 1843 and found, to borrow Roy's words, "that the curve which these prices represented readily coincided not only with the curve of solar radiation but with that of commercial crises as well, he felt that, at long last, he had reached the end of his quest... here then was the confirmation of his theory that the relation between the solar cycle and the decennial cycle of crises was a causal one."

Jevon's theory, however, laboured under one serious difficulty, namely, the commercial crises in England occurred simultaneously with or even in anticipation of the high prices in Delhi. But scarcity conditions, he argued, usually started in areas far away from Delhi and took time to travel. It is well known, for instance, that the great famine occurred in 1769 but did not make itself felt at Delhi. This quite explains why the English crisis was in 1772-73. While appreciating the ingenuity of Jevon's arguments, Roy holds that the tables themselves would prove of use to the economic historians of the period. These tables would have remained unknown but for the interest Jevon took in them. As for the credibility of his source, Rev. Everest, the latter had collected his material from the lists drawn up by the local revenue officers on the basis of authentic official documents.

"Drain" and Industrial Revolution

The view had come to hold the field that profits from Indian trade was one of the main streams of that accumulated capital in England which ignited the Industrial Revolution. Roy, however, was not the person to be persuaded to climb aboard a bandwagon. He applied his mind to the question and stated the results in a paper which he read at a seminar held under the auspices of the Aligarh Muslim University. To the best of my knowledge the paper has remained unpublished. Since much time and thought had been evidently spent on it by the author, it is only fitting that it should be published *in toto* in the present number of the journal dedicated to his memory. It will surely make a difference to the growing bibliography on the subject, leaving as it does far behind the beaten track. The typed copy of the article which Mr. T.K.G. Nair retrieved from Roy's collection was unhappily wanting in precision in several places. I am therefore grateful to my friend Dr. A. Vasudevan, for his kindness in helping me to edit the article.

Frontier Policy

In his exercises in our frontier policy Roy could not see eye to eye with our policy makers. And yet it is axiomatic that the foreign policy of a country follows a set pattern however much each succeeding government may differ from its predecessor in dealing with its domestic affairs. Our frontier policy, a legacy of the British, could not help being patterned on that of the latter. Despite the fact that their writ did not run beyond the foothills of the Assam Himalayas, it was the cherished aim of British policy that on the North-East the Indo-Tibetan frontier should adhere to the crest of the Himalayas along the so-called McMahon Line. On the North-West it should describe a crescent which, starting from the Karakorum Pass, touching a spur of the Kuen Lun mountains and running south, would enclose the Aksai Chin region, following the Johnson-Ardagh Line of the frontier. To establish the claim of the British Government to this frontier, Sir Olaf Caroe, the Deputy Secretary in the Foreign and Political Department, had in the late thirties recourse to a truly extraordinary procedure with the connivance, it would seem, of the higher authorities. In giving the account of the Simla Conference (1913-14), as Karunakar Gupta says in his *Spotlight on Sino-Indian Frontiers* (Calcutta, 1982), p. 29, *Aitchison's Treaties*, Vol. XIV (1929) had observed: "In 1913 a conference of Tibetan, Chinese and British Plenipotentiaries met in India to try and bring about a settlement in regard to matters on the Sino-Tibetan frontier, and a tripartite convention was drawn up and initialled in 1914. The Chinese Government, however, refused to permit their Plenipotentiary to proceed to full signature."

Karunakar Gupta came to know from the India Office records how Olaf Caroe "arranged for the copies of the original *Aitchison's Treaties*, Vol. XIV of 1929 to be withdrawn from the libraries, and replaced them by a faked version with an imprint of 1929." In the "faked version" the above original passage was changed so as to read:

"In 1913 a conference of British, Chinese and Tibetan Plenipotentiaries was convened in Simla in an attempt to negotiate an agreement as to the international status of Tibet with particular regard to the relations of the three Governments and to the frontiers of Tibet both with China and India. After prolonged negotiations the conference under the presidency of Sir Henry McMahon drew up a tripartite Convention between Great Britain, China and Tibet, which was initialled in Simla in 1914 by the representatives of the three parties. The Chinese Government, however, refused to ratify the agreement, by their refusal depriving themselves of the benefits which they were to obtain thereunder, among which were a definite recognition that Tibet was under Chinese suzerainty, and an agreement to permit a Chinese official with a suitable escort not exceeding 300 men to be maintained at Lhasa. The Convention was, however,

ratified by Great Britain and Tibet by means of a declaration accepting its terms as binding as between themselves." *Aitchison Treaties*. Vol. XIV, pp. 20-21.

True, McMahon Line had been secretly agreed to as Indo-Tibetan boundary by the British and Tibetan delegates. But the agreement did not form part of the proceedings of the Conference. The inclusion of the McMahon Line notes and the Simla Convention in the revised volume was obviously intended to show that they are binding in International law. Neither did a consideration of the North-West Frontier, on the admission of the Viceroy Lord Hardinge himself, "form part of the functions of the Conference." (*Ibid.*, p. 32)

In the course of his research in the India Office Records Gupta found the original version of *Aitchison's Treaties*, Vol. XIV. But the revised edition had already become our basic text. And though Nehru counselled moderation in his speeches, even going to the extent of saying (August-September 1959) that though Aksai Chin was shown as our territory in Indian maps, that area had always been under challenge and not a blade of grass grew there, he could not help falling for the Johnson-Ardagh Line which included Aksai Chin as our North-West Frontier.

In his introduction to Gupta's book on the frontier problem (1982), Roy finds fault with this rigid attitude and laments that in his letter to Chou En Lai of September 26, 1959 (or is it December 14, 1958, as quoted in *China Invades India*, p. 188?) Nehru should have "given the wrong impression that the proposal (of Sir Claude Macdonald delimiting the North-West Frontier, handed to the Chinese Foreign Office on March 14, 1899) explicitly asserted that the Northern Frontier of the Ladak region ran along the Kuen Lun range to a point east of Longitude 80° East, where it met the Eastern boundary of Ladak and that the whole of Aksai Chin lay in Indian territory." Twenty years ere Roy's protest, the authors of the *Himalayan Battleground*. (Fisher, Rose and Huttenback) had discovered that the Note of 1899 had said nothing of the sort. (Peking and Delhi", *The Times Literary Supplement* (TLS), January 2, 1964). They had also discovered the Chinese boundary marker of 1892 on the Karakorum pass.

The Report of the Officials of the Government of India and the People's Republic of China on the Boundary Question (New Delhi, 1961), presenting the Indian case, was admired in the West, and Caroe has gone on record describing it as worthy of an Oxford College and declaring that Socrates would not have found fault with it. Now according to this document there is historical evidence to show that in Manchu times the Chinese never claimed any control to the South of the Kuen Lun range, their farthest point South in Sinkiang being "64 miles south of Suket," where they erected a boundary pillar in 1892. The evidence

appeared conclusive. Referring to this event G.F. Hudson could observe in his contribution to *Far Eastern Affairs* (14th issue of *St. Antony's Papers*): "there is no evidence that under the Ching (Manchu) dynasty China ever attempted to come further south than this. In other words, they accepted the Kuen Lun range as the frontier." Hudson, however, was reckoning without the host. As the author of the article in TLS has pointed out, "64 miles south of Suket is not the Kuen Lun range at all: it is, in fact, the summit of the Karakorum Pass on the very crest of the Karakorum range, as a careful look at a good map (on a scale not smaller than 1:1,000,000) will show"

When it was objected that the Macdonald Line of 1899 had neither geographical nor historical basis, the author of the article had no difficulty in providing both: (TLS, Feb. 6, 1964).

It is not known if Roy was aware of the appearance of this article in TLS. But the cartographical evidence that Roy has marshalled reinforces the conclusion of TLS article that the Karokorum range marked the Indo-Tibetan North-West frontier. A closer look therefore is necessary at the Johnson-Ardagh Line, a forward line which we have inherited from the British. It had been put out of court, Roys says, by the then General Staff: it was difficult to defend and was strategically useless.

Recent Trends in Research

Since Independence there has been a spate of publications on modern Indian history. Roy attempts a survey thereof in his article "Recent Trends in Indian Research Activities in Modern Indian History." (*IA*, Vol. XV (1963-64), pp. 54-70). Many of these were inspired by a sense of patriotism and set themselves the task of administering a corrective to British official writings. It was believed that the British official writings were produced with no other object than to promote imperial interests and were suffering "from distortion and suppression of truth, biased judgment and wrong inference." Prominent among such publications setting this new trend was *A Survey of Indian History* by K.M. Panikkar (1947) which, according to Roy, "is remarkable alike for its thesis that 'the true history of India during the British period does not consist of the activities of the East India Company or the British Crown but of the upheaval which led to the transformation of Indian society through the activities of India's own sons,' and for the attempt it has made to belittle the contribution of the British rulers towards that transformation." In a subsequent work, *Asia and Western Dominance* (1953), Panikkar comes down heavily on European imperialism making most of its seamy negative aspects. Writers of the same kidney include Tara Chand, K. K. Datta, and S. B. Chaudhuri who in their works seek "to

establish popular discontent as a constant of the whole of British rule." *The chef-d'oeuvre* of this genre of historiography is R. C. Majumdar's *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance* (1963), the author symbolizing what Roy thinks is a dominant trend in modern Indian historical writing.

Deep dedication and fidelity to the sources characterize these efforts. There were, however, two opposing methods of approach both in the selection of the material and its interpretation. One approach viewed the national movement as the logical outcome of the intellectual and social ferment produced by the operation of British rule, which in the 19th century threw up an *élite*. It is this *élite* that spearheaded the movement. The other approach belittled the part played by the Western enlightenment and regarded the movement as having developed on its own steam.

There were admirable efforts to investigate the inner working of the British imperialist psychology in relation to Indian nationalist aspiration, and remarkable studies of two British statesmen, who tried to bridge the gulf interposed by the imperialist policy between the British ruling classes and the Indian *élite*.

There has been no lacking of interest in the history of the past, which continues to be dealt with in self-complete compartments: political, administrative, social, economic and so forth. There is, however, a predilection for regional history, to the neglect of comprehensive studies embracing the entire country. The exception is Sir Jadunath Sarkar's four volumes of *The Fall of the Mughal Empire*. In this monumental work "three themes," in the words of Roy, "of the decaying old order, the rising peripheral powers, and the triumphant British imperialism supplanting both have been orchestrated into a single mighty epic of tragic grandeur narrated with masterly erudition and subtle artistry." The main trend is biographical in political history. A well-known historical figure is selected and a picture is drawn of his political, administrative and social environment.

In regional history the preponderating tendency is towards the administrative and economic aspects. The restricted scope has enabled the authors to delve deep into the archives of the period. Their works, however, suffer from a common defect: they are pronouncedly formal, not penetrating "beyond the surface," as Roy puts it, "in order to locate or identify the forces behind the scene which made the administration what it really was."

In economic history, which has claimed a larger number of votaries, the popular theme of research is the economic ruin of India under the British impact. But there is decidedly more leg work thanks to the wealth of source material now available. The familiar "Drain" theory has been pushed out of the old ruts with new interpretations being given to it like that which discerns economic drain in

the chronic excess of exports over imports which formed the chief feature, for instance, of Bengal trade during a particular period. Economic thought on agrarian economy is not so much on the structure of this economy as on the transformation it went through under the influence of British rule. The disintegration of the self-sufficient village community leading to the impoverishment of the peasantry or the downward plunge of agriculture due to increased pressure on agricultural land, both leading to unemployment, were responsible for the migration of the peasantry to the cities and the crippling of the village economy.

There was no dearth of competent studies on the reforms introduced by the British in the various spheres of social life. But the besetting sin of this class of literature is that it does not show how social legislation has helped or hampered at different levels the achievement of its intended results.

"Yet when all is said," concludes Roy, "the record of the period under review can hardly be regarded as altogether gloomy. If much still remains to be done there is no denying that much has also been achieved and that many an obscure area in recent history has been brought into a clearer view."

Our Loss

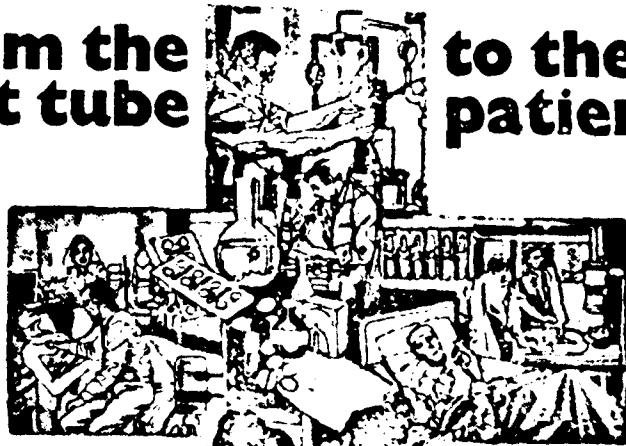
Highly gifted as he was, Roy would have made a mark in any avocation suitable to his abilities. His teachers were so impressed by him that Professor S. C. Sen Gupta, his professor of English who later became the Principal of the Presidency College, Calcutta, was only voicing the opinion of his colleagues when he wrote that Roy was the best pupil he had taught and one of the most cultured men he had met. The marvel of such a man, however, does not rest on what he was capable of doing. For talents of mind and music are simply gifts received from God and need not form a source of special tribute. Rather we should look to what a recipient of such gifts has done with them. It would be agreed from the study we have made of his writings that Roy emerges as an outstanding archivist and brilliant historian. He carried out to the extent he was capable what he conceived to be the task of the Indian historian: to unravel the structure and the development of the Indian society as a whole. He insisted that the historian's primary duty is to give the facts and that history should be non-partisan, and himself practised the precept. He held that historical research is strictly conditioned by the availability of the sources of the necessary type and quality. He helped in making this possible by inspiring and assisting the publication programme of the National Archives of India. And for the rest, he hoped that the historian of modern India would make full use of the archival sources taking advantage of the opening of the National and State Archives to the

public. "He himself did much," as Professor Holden Furber has aptly remarked, in his splendid tribute to him, "to make possible the work of many scholars, Indian and foreign, who have illumined India's modern history."

NOTES

1. *The Indian Archives (IA)*, Vol. XV (1963), p. 67
2. *IA*, Vol. XIV (1961-62), p. 15
3. "A Statement of Research Work Done", (unpublished) a note found among the Roy MSS. hereinafter *Statement*.
4. Edu. F. No. 50-24/48—EI
5. *Ibid.*
6. F. No. 33-6-47/Rec. For information under notes 4 to 6 I am indebted to Mr. T. K. G. Nair
7. *Statement*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*

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THE GROWTH OF BRITISH POWER IN INDIA 1708-1748

HOLDEN FURBER

Foreword: What follows is a revised and slightly shortened text of a public lecture delivered at the University of London in 1968 and not hitherto published. To publish this now, in the inaugural number of this journal, in memory of an Indian archivist and scholar with whom my friendship goes back to my first days in India in 1936 is a rare privilege. For nearly half a century Sourin Roy did much to make possible the work of many scholars, Indian and foreign, who have illumined India's modern history. Even in the past fifteen years, the subject of this lecture has been much further developed. Work on what I called in 1948 "the as yet almost uncharted sea of India's economic and social history in the eighteenth century" is already well advanced,—may this journal help to speed its progress.

OVER HALF A CENTURY AGO, P.E. Roberts, in concluding Sir William Hunter's unfinished work on the early history of British India, described the three and a half decades after the union of the two English East India companies in 1708 as "years of comparative obscurity—of silent inward development, of sound finance, and of commercial prosperity ... The brilliant attack launched by Dupleix and Labourdonnais upon the English settlements in 1746 stung into life a dormant and lethargic but solid and growing power." It is in the hope of throwing more light into these years of obscurity that I have been for some time engaged in a study of this period, especially of British activities as reflected in non-British sources—Dutch, Danish, French, and Portuguese. In my earlier delving into later decades—the 1770's and 1780's, two aspects of European expansion in India had especially fascinated me—the interrelations between

Europeans in their search for fame and fortune, and the multifarious forms of partnership between Europeans and non-Europeans of all castes, creeds, and ethnic backgrounds—such contacts interacting with each other to make British power ever more dominant in India and indeed throughout the Eastern Seas. Therefore, I naturally wondered what these relations were like in the period before British rule over Indians really began.

Donald F. Lach in the first volume of his outstanding work on the impact of Asia on Europe reminds us that hitherto the emphasis has always been the other way about—on the impact of Europe upon Asia. Valuable as it is to be so reminded, I continue to feel that the penetration of Asia by the West is the more extraordinary and remarkable story. I frequently ask my American students to imagine for a moment what their lives would have been like if this story had been

fully the other way around—the continent in which Americans live conquered, their public services run, their dams and canals built, by a handful of “experts” from afar in whose alien language Americans would have been forced to become proficient in order to complete their education. Just as we may never be able fully to explain the fascination that Asia, especially India, has for the European so we may never fully explain the Asian’s, especially the Indian’s, acceptance of the European in many forms of partnership. To attribute the one wholly to the easy life, in pleasant bungalows well staffed with servants, and the like, is just as mistaken as to attribute the other wholly to sullen and passive submission to superior power. In his present era of the “liquidation” of the British and other European “empires,” the study of relations between Europeans and Indians, before foreign “empire” existed is even more appropriate than it was in Sir William Hunter’s day, for it is quite clear that Europeans are remaining in Asia and must depend for their “acceptance” on something other than force of arms, and any illusions of racial superiority.

Since, from my previous work, the foundations of British power seemed unquestionably to lie in the expansion of British participation in the trade within the Eastern seas called the “country-trade”, questions naturally arose as to the British position in such trade after 1708. Did the available information show an increase in British-commanded “country-ships”? Did it show an increase in British-owned country-ships? Did it reveal an increasing use of the English East India Company’s “pass” by country-ships? To whatever sources I turned, with the possible exception of data on “country” arrivals and departures at Madras, the answer to such questions was yes. Clearly, there were many more British country-captains in 1743 than in 1723 or 1714. Clearly, the country-tonnage owned by these captains, by British “free merchants” and Company servants in India at least doubled during these early eighteenth-century decades, and, just as clearly, the Company’s “pass”, with the development of the Company’s local navy, the Bombay Marine, was ever more respected.

The best evidence for these developments comes from the Dutch East India Company’s records of maritime activity at Cochin. From these and others relating to Mocha and Surat we can watch this growth, both in terms of tonnage and of ships. For example, at Cochin between 1724 and 1742 British country-tonnage rose from three thousand tons to six or seven thousand, and the number of different British country-captains who frequented that port increased from seventeen to twenty-eight. The Dutch Company’s chiefs and councils in India were by no means oblivious to this increase, especially after 1740. I am confident that the reproduction of the masses of data on shipping in the Dutch records and the use of a computer on these figures would reveal this trend even more sharply.

Behind the data so carefully compiled by the Dutch Company’s servants at Cochin, Surat and Chinsura on the Hugli above Calcutta lie many human stories of success and failure, disease and death, quarrels and betrayals of trust. From the “country” sea captains’ names, it would appear that few could stand the life for more than six seasons. The diaries, called “consultations”, kept at the European East India companies’ factories are replete with the auction of deceased mariners’ goods. The court records reveal quarrels between captains claiming that one has defrauded another. Such a quarrel between captains John Sleddall and John Asselin shows that there were sales of country-ships at auction in Calcutta in 1723. Sleddall accused Asselin, as his agent, of negligence in failing to purchase a ship. I am inclined to think that Bengal became more and more the “home port” of captains even though their chief “concerns” might be elsewhere. This is one of the factors, which even in this early period, is making Calcutta a more “European” town as compared with Bombay or Madras.

The explanation of the slow growth of British country-trade at Madras would appear to lie in what contemporaries call the “pull to the Eastward” as well as the continued greater activity of country-trading in the Arabian Sea. The British East India Company’s ever growing participation in the tea trade enhanced the attractions of voyages to the China seas by the more daring country-trader. At the Calcutta auction of 1723, a ship was withdrawn because her owner suddenly needed her for a voyage to China. This whole subject has been illumined by the remarkable work of Louis Dermigny on the China Trade. Under pressure from the British country-trader, Dutch ability to police the Malay seas markedly lessened, and as no British country-captain would venture into the region without some opium aboard, Madras, not being a logical place to load opium, tended to become a port of call rather than a headquarters for many British country-captains.

It seems to me true of the first half of the eighteenth century as of certain earlier periods that the growth of European activity in the trade within the Asian seas is not made at the expense of the non-European-commanded or owned shipping. The Dutch kept separate lists of so-called “Moor” shipping. Although these lists seem less carefully compiled than their “European” lists, they do not support any contention that Europeans were supplanting Indian-commanded or Indian-owned shipping. A sampling of these lists for Bengal points to the conclusion that “Moor” shipping in the Hugli held its own, having approximately the same share of the trade of the river in 1743 as in 1714. At the beginning and end of our period, the number of arrivals and departures per season placed under this head appears to be approximately twenty-seven; no record was kept of small craft. In other words, European activity was constantly on the march, but it was on the march chiefly because it was exploiting new opportunities, new voyages

and the changes in the movements of commodities which its own intrusion into the Asian scene was constantly fostering. No one, I think, now holds that European seamanship was uniformly superior to Indian seamanship on voyages between Asian ports. The problem of the relationship of one to the other is much more complex and deserves greater study than it has hitherto received. There was a superiority in European equipment; expansion of country-trade widened the market for "marine stores" exported from Europe primarily in the "private and privileged" trade of captains and officers of East Indiamen. Yet there was no necessary superiority in ship-building; an India-built country-ship was as good or better than any Europe-built ship of her class, even though there are instances in this period of the English East India Company's permission still being sought for the export of ships from Europe to remain in the East as "country-ships". On October 18, 1717, the Court of Directors allowed John Scattergood and Thomas Harris to return to Madras as "Free Merchants" and carry out an English 350-ton ship to "trade from port to port but never to return to Europe."¹ European captains and mates were certainly regarded as better for some purposes than for others. Indians, especially Parsi, owners were well aware that, for long dangerous voyages, a European-officered country-ship involved less risk. Nevertheless, some of the largest of country-ships, especially in the voyages between Surat, Arabia and Persia, had Indian, "Arab", or "Turkish" officers. On the other hand, European owners had no hesitation in employing completely non-European crews for many types of shorter "coastal" voyages. Nearly every company servant above the rank of writer on the Madras establishment in the 1720's owned or had fractional interests in small country-ships commanded by trusted "noquedahs" or "tindals" who furnished the lascar crews.

Occasionally we get glimpses of how interwoven the interests of European and non-European can be in country-voyages. The Dutch Mocha shipping list for the trading season of 1738/39 is one of the few which differentiates ownership of cargo. Plying between Diu and Mocha are, for example, the ship *Diu*, 300 tons, 30 guns, 8 lascars, Portuguese captain, carrying piece goods and cotton owned by "banians", and the *Enterpriser* and *Resolution*, both of similar size and armament, but with English captains, fully loaded with piece-goods owned by "Surat borahs." Similarly, the Dutch lists of "Moor" shipping show a case of a French owner's quarter-interest in an otherwise completely "Moor" ship and cargo. Furthermore, "Armenian" ownership is sometimes classed as "Moor", and there are English captains often in charge of Armenian-owned cargoes. Also, although smuggling of Indian goods to the Americas was usually indirect, there are cases of British country-captains making the continuous voyage. Accompanied by English and German supercargoes, an English master took a frigate laden with piece-goods under Portuguese colors from Calcutta to Brazil in 1733.²

Quite clearly then, we can safely say that, in these decades, the country-trade is steadily expanding, that non-European participation in it is, at any rate, not contracting (indeed, as to capital invested and employment of non-Europeans as seamen such participation may be increasing), and that British activity is responsible for the lion's share of this expansion of country-trade in the Indian seas. Evidence from the lists of country-ships and captains calling at Cochin, Surat, Calcutta, Madras, Mocha and Gombroon (Bander Abbas) shows that non-British European commanded and owned country-shipping and cargoes remain about the same or decrease as these years go by. Why? The answers which the available evidence seems to suggest are these.

As for the Portuguese, these decades reflect a further decline. At the beginning of our period, 1708, Portuguese is still the lingua franca of commercial intercourse and regional diplomacy in the Indian seas. The Portuguese "linguist", usually a Eurasian, is essential to every European trading "factory" and to many a local prince. The Portuguese "pass" is in demand at Goa and Surat by many coastal country-traders. At the end, in 1748, the transitional period in which Portuguese gives way to English as the commercial lingua franca is already under way. The Eurasian captains of Portuguese descent are seeking the English Company's "pass" in greater numbers. The government at Goa, after making an occasional vigorous attempt to assert itself, as at Mocha in the 1730's, cannot recover from the blows it received at the hands of the Marathas who took Thana in 1737 and Bassein in 1739. Only 10,000 rupees of trading capital are considered to be under Portuguese protection at Surat by 1750.³

As for the Dutch, the reasons for their failure to develop private country-trading in stiff competition with the ever more ubiquitous British in the Indian seas must be sought through three lines of enquiry. There are first those broader aspects of Anglo-Dutch economic relations reflected in the generalizations that London was slowly but surely supplanting Amsterdam as the financial capital of the world,—that the conclusion of the War of the Spanish Succession in 1713-14 marks the turn of the tide in Dutch affairs with the decline of the Dutch East India Company clearly apparent after 1736. Second are the broader aspects of the Dutch East India Company's position as a country-trader in the East. The English East India Company as a corporate body was never a country-trader to the extent that the Dutch Company was. Throughout these decades, the English Company gave its servants virtually free rein as country-traders, and it was quite liberal in granting licenses to British subjects to come out to its settlements as "free merchants". In the middle of the period, it made one serious attempt to protect its own country-trading activities from competition by its servants, but it came to naught. The Madras Council, even though they had just

received orders from London against private trade to Sumatra, had no hesitation in granting permission to Jeremiah Collins and others associated in the ownership of the country-ship *Petersfield* to trade "amongst the Malays for benzoin, camphor and gold" in 1724. Eight years later, Governor Deane, just returned from Bengal, told the Company's Committee of Correspondence that young "writers" at Calcutta would have been "affronted" if he had investigated their private affairs to find out the extent of their profits on country trade.⁴

The Dutch Company on the other hand pursued a policy which restricted the development of Dutch-commanded country-shipping in the Arabian and Indian seas, — a policy which was not really relaxed until the so-called reforms of 1743, when the British individual country-trader, whether Company servant, sea-captain or "free merchant" was already far ahead. It obviously would not do to let the marketing in India of spices and copper (or the collection of cotton piece-goods in return) fall out of the Dutch Company's control, since basically the Dutch Company, quite in contrast to the English Company, was as much a country-trader as a "Europe-trader". Hence, Dutch policy restricted private Dutch country-shipping, and even the Batavia regulation of 24 September 1743 simply said: "Freedom of voyage and trade is thrown open under conditions of security and the respective councils at each factory, each with regard to its own peculiar situation, shall give their consideration as to how the consequences of such trade may be directed toward the Company's best advantage."⁵ On May 4, 1744, a brigantine, arriving in Calcutta laden with cotton from Surat, is reported as the "first Dutch vessel trading on private account pursuant to the new regulation."⁶

Finally, there are the purely human aspects of the matter. In the early eighteenth century, the centre of Dutch effort had long been in the Malay archipelago not in the Arabian Sea, or the Bay of Bengal; in the intra Asian trade of the Malay Seas, Chinese and other non-Europeans played a major role. Also, there is clearly a problem of European man-power. When, at the ports on the Indian subcontinent, one sees the number of Dutch-officered country-ships, usually less than ten, fail to increase, one wonders whether the demands of the Dutch East India Company itself plus those of the Levant and the Baltic are not leaving a smaller supply of mariners available for private Dutch-commanded intra-Asian trading ventures.

French private country-trading likewise did not markedly increase at the Indian ports during these decades. It is rare to find more than six French entries annually in the lists compiled by the Dutch. The reasons for this are much less clear. Their resources in seamen ought to have been comparable to the British. The evidence after 1720 suggests that the British had no hesitation whatever in

harassing them, especially on the Malabar Coast, even to the point of violence no matter what the situation was in Europe. The records are full of petty Anglo-French quarrels. With the settlement of the islands, Isle de France (Mauritius) and Bourbon (Réunion), the French could fall back on the development of coffee cultivation on Bourbon and the slave trade increasingly operated via Mauritius. Their only hope of catching up with the British would appear to have lain, as it did later, in the success of a full scale naval effort directed from Europe.

On reflection, it does seem to be clear that by 1708, on the Indian subcontinent and the seas surrounding it, the British are already well ahead of other Europeans as country-traders. By the 1720's, the situation has already developed to the point where such business contacts as there are between the servants of European East India companies contribute to the enhancement of British power in India. The private partnership in 1747 of Governor William Wake of Bombay and Jacob Mossel, the Second-in-Council at Batavia, in country-trading ventures under British captains illustrates the way in which this is happening at the end of our period. True enough, the process is not yet much accelerated by pressures to remit British fortunes clandestinely to Britain through the purchase of the Dutch Company's bills of exchange. The first case of this which I have found is an isolated and curious one. On January 8, 1746, the Dutch Council at Chinsura received from William Davis, Second-in-Council at Calcutta, 39,246 rupees, 7 annas, and 6 pice, and a bill was duly drawn at 28 stuivers per rupee for 54,945 guilders and 1 stuiver, but Davis agreed that his agents in Amsterdam would be content with 50,000 guilders? The supposition is strong that Davis had to offer a bribe of nearly 5000 guilders to make this remittance. No other British name appears on Chinsura bill lists in the late 1740's, nor are there extensive deposits by foreign Europeans in the English Company's "cash" at its three presidencies in India. Yet at the Company's settlements in India, foreign Europeans and British, whether Company's servants, country-captains, or free merchants were entering into friendships and partnerships with each other in making a way of life for themselves in India with a view to returning home with a "competence" rather than a fortune.

The Danish Company's letter-books at Tranquebar reveal these contacts perhaps more fully than any other source because the English Company servants at Madras from the governor down wrote freely to the Danes of their own private "concerns", their Indian agents, their relations with country-captains. The greatest attraction that the Danes had to offer was Swedish iron in return for saltpetre, rice, or piece-goods. Let us dip into this correspondence in the 1730's and 1740's. In July 1733, Governor George Morton Pitt used Nathaniel Wright and Noah Casamajor, supercargoes on the ship *Fort St. George* as intermediaries to buy 400 candies of iron for him. Through much of 1734, James Hubbard, the English Company's chief factor at Fort St. David, is in cor-

respondence with Governor Panck at Tranquebar about both saltpetre and piece-goods. He puts Panck in touch with Nathaniel Turner because none of the English Company's servants at Madras are better than Mr. Turner in collecting the sorts of piece goods Panck wants. He advises Panck on the proper timing of the sales of iron and the purchases of saltpetre, for the British country-captains look only to their immediate profit and will not load saltpetre in preference to rice when rice is in greater demand on the Coromandel coast. In 1735, 1736 and 1737 Governor Benyon of Madras is in continuous correspondence with the Danish governors about his own private trade. From this it appears that the use of Danish Company's "pass" is giving way to the British in voyages to the "Eastward". Members of the Calcutta Council are at this time dealing with the Danes through Armenian agents. With the coming of war in the 1740's the relations between Benyon's and Panck's successors, Morse and Bonsack, are even more intimate; Bonsack owns a country-ship and is advised by Morse with regard to his country-trading ventures to Burma.⁸

When, with such correspondence in mind, we read of frequent visits by Frenchmen from Pondicherry at Fort St. David or Madras, it is very unlikely that commercial dealings between them and the British in their private capacities do not lie behind such visits. When we hear that the Jesuits in China want to invest more funds in the English Company's "cash" at Madras, we must conclude not only that they are more certain than ever of the hundreds of "foreign European" and Indian investors in what later was known as the English Company's "rupee debt" at its three Presidencies.⁹

Indeed the increase in the sale of the Company's bills of exchange payable in London is in itself perhaps the most dramatic evidence of the increasing British "country-trade" in the Indian seas. Annual payments rise from approximately £ 175,000 to £ 200,000 between 1732 and 1747. Until the last years of our period, very little of this can represent money made by British subjects in any other way. Although collusion between the Company's servants and their Indian agents for their own private advantage is never entirely absent from the business of providing the Company's homeward cargoes, the days of numerous corrupt bullock contracts and the like, engendered by military activity in the *mofussil*, are yet to come. The increase in the sale of "certificates"—the term for bills of exchange in which the captains and officers of the Company's "Europe" ships invested the proceeds of their outward private trade—shows of course the growth of "outward privilege" which consisted chiefly, of anchors, grapnels, tar, pitch and other gear for country-ships.

This is, obviously, not the only point at which country-trade and Europe trade interact. I have considered country-trade (and the increasing British par-

ticipation in it) first because it does seem to me that, though they are both bound up together as parts of one whole, the country-trade has become by this period the driving force, the indispensable base on which the "Europe" trade rests. How long this has been so is a question we cannot explore here. At this period surely, the owners of the Company's shipping could not have recruited their captains and ships' officers, the Company itself could not have recruited its servants, if the inducements of private gain through country-trade had not been present. As is indicated in our discussion above of the stagnation of Dutch private trade, the English Company's servants overseas were freer of the restraints enjoined by the "Honourable Masters" in Europe. Again and again, we read of the servants' private "concerns" as dominant at Mocha, Gombroon, Anjengo, Tellicherry, Isphahan.¹⁰ Proof that the Company's own corporate concerns are run at a loss will not bring reform at these places if their servants' private gains are increasing.

Whether we look at British activities in the East India Trade from the vantage point of Europe or of India, it seems as if there were always a greater British reservoir of entrepreneurial energy than the Company's system could accommodate. To my mind, the mainspring of such activity in Ostend, Trieste, Hamburg, and Gothenberg is British. A contemporary broadside in the British Museum lists thirty-two clandestine voyages under English and Irish officers in the seven trading seasons 1714/15-1720/21 before the Ostend Company was officially founded, under captains Sarsfield, Tobin, Opie, Welsh, Pearson, Penicuit, French, Holmes and others.¹¹ Without such Irish Jacobite, Scottish and renegade English skilled and experienced East India mariners and supercargoes, few of these voyages organized at these ports could have taken place. It is, of course, important that the English East India Company, in concert with the Dutch Company, beat down their attacks, but this diplomatic and economic offensive should be regarded more as bringing these British back into the fold than as repelling a potentially lethal foreign attack. After all, who were the mainstay of the Ostend Company while it lasted but a London Quaker family of Scottish origin, the Humes, one of whom Alexander Hume is, at the end of our period—high in the Direction of the English East India Company and a member of its Secret Committee?¹²

As is the case with the piracy in the Indian seas at this period, based in northern Madagascar and staffed mainly by rogues of Irish, Scottish and English origin, the reason why so much attention is paid to the Ostenders and the other so-called "illicit" voyages between Europe and the East is their colorful character. One or more of the features common to most of them—whether it is the swift change of flags, the existence of two captains, two owners, or two sets of supercargoes, one British and the other the "cover" needed to comply with the laws of the monarch whose flag is being used—provide material for drama.

Schemes which never got past what is now called the "planning stage" like the idea of substituting the Swedish flag for the Jolly Roger and turning the European pirates based in Madagascar into a Swedish East India Company in the early 1720's, are no less bizarre from our point of view than a voyage like the *Ulrica Eleanora's* under Swedish colors in 1733-34. In her voyage, we have nearly all the possible eventualities coming to pass—a Scottish supercargo, a disgruntled English "East India" captain, a nominal Swedish captain, a joint English and French East India Company capture of the *Ulrica Eleanora's* cargo at Porto Novo, the ship's escape to Bengal—the English captain ignominiously fleeing over the back wall of the Dutch factory at Tegenapatnam and taking refuge with the Danes at Tranquebar. The *Eleanora*, originally the English East Indiaman *Heathcote*, gets safely back to Gothenburg. After six years of tedious correspondence between the two governments, the exhausted Court of Directors in London finally agree to pay no more than £ 5000 as an indemnity for the seized cargo.¹³ The dozen or so other voyages of this type to India in the 1730's have similar qualities, and increase the opportunities for individual entrepreneurship, again more among British than non-British Europeans.

Let us now look at two other aspects of the "East India" trade in these early eighteenth century decades, the more intense British participation in the "China" trade and the growing importance of the export from London of private "foreign silver" and coral to stimulate "returns" to London chiefly in diamonds and to a lesser extent in gold. Delving among the records of the English East India Company's Committee of Correspondence in the 1720's, 1730's and 1740's, I have had the impression that more papers concern the fixing of captains' and supercargoes' private interests in exports to, and imports from, China than anything else. This is not only a matter of "private and privilege" trade in the cargo-space assigned to them as individuals; it is a matter of their percentage interest in and their commission on the Company's return cargoes of tea and chinaware; it is a matter of the regulation of the extent to which they can bring back the "returns" of their own "privilege" in—the so-called "shoes" of gold,—a practice which captains and ships' officers continued throughout our period, though supercargoes were forbidden to invest in gold after 1736. Needless to say, too, it is a matter often of individual greed breaking through the regulations and causing "cause célèbres" of corruption like that of the James Naish discussed at length in Conrad Gill's work on merchants and mariners. I am especially struck with the ways in which this growth of the Company's tea trade gives greater scope to entrepreneurship by British subjects. It is a disguised expansion of private trade on the Company's shipping. It stimulates British-commanded "country-voyages" from Indian ports to the China seas. In the 1740's the Dutch start to restrain British captains who are trying to trade at Indonesian ports where such captains claim no European authority is established.

Again, it is a case of the Dutch being too late. The English captains are too well entrenched. Their contacts with Dutch Company servants have steadily grown; spices in larger quantities are leaving the Malay seas on English country ships. On July 1, 1745, John Newman a disgruntled English mate or supercargo, put ashore with two others at Selangor by an English country captain wrote the Dutch Chief and Council at Malacca of his plight, for the Sultan of Selangor had stripped the three Europeans of all they had except their clothes which they were selling to keep alive. Newman described the nature of the clandestine trade driven by English country captains at Palembang since the beginning of 1741. He had been mate on two voyages and kept all the accounts. Opium, iron cannon, small arms, saltpetre, piece-goods, and salt were being exchanged for tin and black and white paper. A scottish captain Andrew Munro loaded 70 tons of pepper and a large quantity of tin in December 1744 at Kuala Pontian; he lied when he said he came from Trenggannu. In informing against Munro, Newman wants the Dutch to confiscate the ship and imprison its Portuguese steward from Madras and "Mohamed Sibi, a Malabar" who "have done all for Captain Munro, and who intend to smuggle gold out of Malacca." If the Dutch will help Newman and his friends escape from Selangor and give them some kind of a ship, Newman "will make all things clear" to them and tell what sums the English have spent in Palembang.¹⁴

In 1752, it will require thirteen folios in the Dutch records just to list English violations from Benkulen of Dutch shipping regulations. In June of 1748, the English Company's Court of Directors authorized the use of force against the Dutch pretensions to exclusive trade in the straits of Malacca. Just before the outbreak of Anglo-French war in 1744, Dupleix's own correspondence with the Dutch Governor-General, Von Imhoff, shows that Dupleix's own private ventures to China involve contacts with English country-captains. The better known British attempts to trade at Benjarmassin in Borneo and at southern Chinese ports other than Canton are part of this picture.

The effects of greater British infiltration in eastern Asia naturally are felt in western Asia in the last years of our period. In a comprehensive report of the Dutch trading position at Surat in 1750, Jan Schreuder showed how Parsee "capital" was passing from Dutch to British "protection", with the British already "protecting" five lakhs of rupees as contrasted with the Dutch three and a half.¹⁵ This is to a marked degree a consequence of spices and other items formerly wholly under Dutch control being increasingly smuggled by British country-captains. Even as early as 1734, five British country-ships from Bengal and one from Basra had brought into Surat 85 chests of cloves, nine of mace, and eighteen of nutmeg.¹⁶

Through "country-voyages" between the Indian and China seas, the grow-

ing tea trade to Europe moves gold into Madras, and this process links up with that exchange of silver and coral for diamonds and gold at Madras to which I referred above. No one who dips into the Company's home cash journal side by side with the Madras Consultations can fail to be struck with the growth of this "coral and diamond" trade. At the beginning of our period, Company servants are acting as agents for the Portuguese-Jewish exporters of Italian coral from London. At the end, there is a sizeable group of Portuguese-Jewish dealers in Madras who are selling the coral and investing the proceeds in the bulses of diamonds which are all carefully itemized in the Company's Cash Journal because of the Company's duty on the import of diamonds.

Like country-captains and "free merchants", the London dealers often request licenses to export "foreign silver" (chiefly Spanish dollars) instead of coral. The differing ratio between silver and gold in Europe, as compared with that prevailing at Canton, coupled with the dominant position of gold "pagodas" as currency throughout southern India drew gold into Madras from the Eastern Seas. In 1746, an investment of 100 Spanish silver dollars, costing in Amsterdam 260 guilders, could bring returns in gold which would sell for 346 guilders.¹⁷ As for the coral trade, I found in the Portuguese records in Lisbon evidence that merchants from Leghorn were still residing in Goa in the 1740's lending money to the treasury of the Estado da India at this time of stress after the Maratha victories over the Portuguese. Whether their coral was coming "overland" via the Red Sea or Persian Gulf is not clear. The greater attention paid in India to the trade with the Philippines, and the role of Armenian merchants in it, is part of the same picture.

All these developments naturally draw more Europeans to India, and, especially at the English East India Company's three "presidency" towns, bring more contacts between British and Indians. What was the nature of these contacts? It has been too common, I think, to make a very sharp distinction between a late Victorian era characterized by a great gulf between "European" and "Indian", and an easy-going eighteenth century where nothing like racial discrimination existed. There is an important distinction between these two eras, but it is of a different character. In the eighteenth century we are still in a world where the social cleavages and distinctions observed are those prevailing within the respective societies, distinctions based not exclusively on race. Normally, all the forms appropriate to what contemporaries called one's "station in life" are used by Europeans in their relations with Indians and vice versa. From my work in British and Dutch records of this period, I find it difficult to believe that the European was uniformly resented as an unwelcome intruder or that he universally regarded himself as superior, especially vis-a-vis non-Europeans whose "station in life" was on a par with, or above, his own. I see no evidence that Europeans are uniformly hated by those who did business with them. On the

contrary, British power grows because there are more and more British among these Europeans in exile constantly strengthening more intricate economic relationships with the people among whom they live.

It is a great mistake, however, to underrate the military component in this growing power. The records do not support any contention that the English Company's military strength stagnates in the years before news of war with France reached India in September, 1744. More than once, the Directors at home enjoin reductions in the military establishments of all three Presidencies but the men on the spot and the course of events enjoin two steps forward for every step back. Likewise, the governors and councils in India sometimes cannot prevent their subordinates from military action despite their express orders to preserve neutrality in local disputes; such was the case when the Company's agent at Cambay organized the defence of one bastion of the fort during a siege in 1748.¹⁸ The exercise of military pressure on land, well beyond the bounds of one of the Companies trading "factories", is rare—the regular protection of saltpetre shipments from Patna to Calcutta is perhaps the best example, but the exercise of military pressure on the sea becomes ever more common,—to coerce the nawab of Bengal, stop the trade up to Hugli; to bring the governor of Mocha to book, block the port; to curb pirates, call up the Bombay Marine, founded and developed in these decades. But the British military power which has received least attention is the naval power financed by neither Company nor King, that of the growing fleet of British-commanded and officered country-servants each with its complement of guns.

These are some of the things to bear in mind when one considers the steady rise in gross profit on the Company's "Europe" trade as a whole during these decades—a rise which seemed strange to Professor Bal Krishna in 1924 when he estimated it at approximately £ 30,000,000. They help to explain the rate at which the proceeds of sales of tea and china were caught up with the proceeds of sales of cotton piece-goods, why the Company's Indian brokers are so patient under the pressure put upon them to buy wollens they do not really want as they watch the Company's imports of silver rise steadily bringing direct profits to them and ancillary profits to their associates. They explain why the Madras mint is such a hive of activity coining bullion and Spanish dollars into rupees and Sumatran and Chinese gold into pagodas. Imports of Company and "private" silver from Europe into India are not greatly reduced by the availability of funds paid into the Company's "cash" by country-captains, "Europe" captains and Company servants in return for bills on London. Both these sources of income contribute to the Company's welfare for it is spending the major part of its assets in India on the "investment" for Europe and not on administrative or military expenses.

By taking the Indian seas as the main vantage point in this study, I have tried to suggest that the growth of British power in India is greater in these years, and its bases are inherently stronger than has hitherto been thought. The distinction

between an era of peaceful trade and an era of ruthless conquest inaugurated by Clive has been too sharply drawn. There was a good deal of force in the peaceful trade, military as well as economic. From the subcontinent and the adjacent seas the British led from a position of strength which the developments here discussed did much to make impregnable. It is true enough that almost none of the traders wanted European war to spread to India in the 1740's, but it is significant that it is the French Company not the British which made the greatest effort to neutralize the Eastern Seas—an effort warmly welcomed by the Dutch.¹⁹ It is likewise true that an unforeseen interaction between local anarchy in the Carnatic and Anglo-French naval warfare really lighted the fuse for the dramatic events of the 1750's. What I have been trying to demonstrate is that even before these happenings which contemporaries could not have been expected to foresee, the ever-growing British power in India is very soundly based. The Dutch have missed their chance because they cannot divert enough energy from the empire they already have elsewhere. The French are about to miss theirs, not only because they came late to India, but because much energy which might have gone into country-trade based at Surat, Mahé, and Pondichéry went into the development of coffee on Bourbon and the settlement of the Isle of France (Mauritius). It does seem that in the first half of the eighteenth century as in the last, the relations between Europeans themselves and between Europeans and Indians reacted upon each other to make Great Britain's power stronger in India than that of any other European state.

NOTES

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2. Algemeen Rijksarchief (The Hague). Kolonial Archieven, 2209, letter, Dutch factory at Porto Novo to Negapatam Feb. 6, 1734.
3. H. Furber, *Bombay Presidency in the Mid-Eighteenth Century*, p. 64.
4. I.O., Corr. Repts 2, Examination of Gov. Deane Nov. 23, 1732.
5. A.R., K.A. Collectie Hoge Regering 837, cited in para 1 of "Consideration nopens de Vrye Vaart en Handel" by Jan Schreuder.
6. I.O., Corr. Mem 12, sheet endorsed "Bengal News Paper".
7. A.R., K.A. 2533 p. 14 Hugli bill list Jan. 8, 1746.
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9. I.O., Corr. Repts 2, January 22, 1725, the Court of Directors allowed the Jesuits to increase their deposit from £10,000 to £20,000. On 4 December 1737, the Jesuits' attorney wrote from Macao asking leave to deposit £10,000 or £20,000 in addition; see Misc. Let. Rec. 28.
10. I.O., Abstracts of Letters to Bombay, March 13, 1744. The Court of Directors say they "have been carrying on a losing trade in Persia for twenty years."
11. British Library: undated broadside c. 1722.
12. In 1747, the Secret Committee were H. Gough, Richard Cheney, Alexander Hume. See A.R.K.A. Collectie Hoge Regering 36. Secret Committee of English E.I. Co. to Baron Imhoff at Batavia, July 24, 1747.
13. I.O., Corr. Repts. 3, July 9, 1740. For details, see Kristof Glamann, "En Ostindisk Reise eller

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15. A.R., K.A., Collectie Hoge Regering 838, "Memorie" Sept. 30, 1750.
16. A.R., K.A. 2213, Surat II, 51.
17. A.R., K.A. 2550, p. 1237: account dated Sept. 1746.
18. I.O. Factory Records, Surat, June 23, 1748.
19. A.R., K.A. 2540, p. 1453, January 6, 1745, resolution of Council at Cochin on hearing from Pondicherry that the French East India Company had ordered neutrality east of the Cape of Good Hope.

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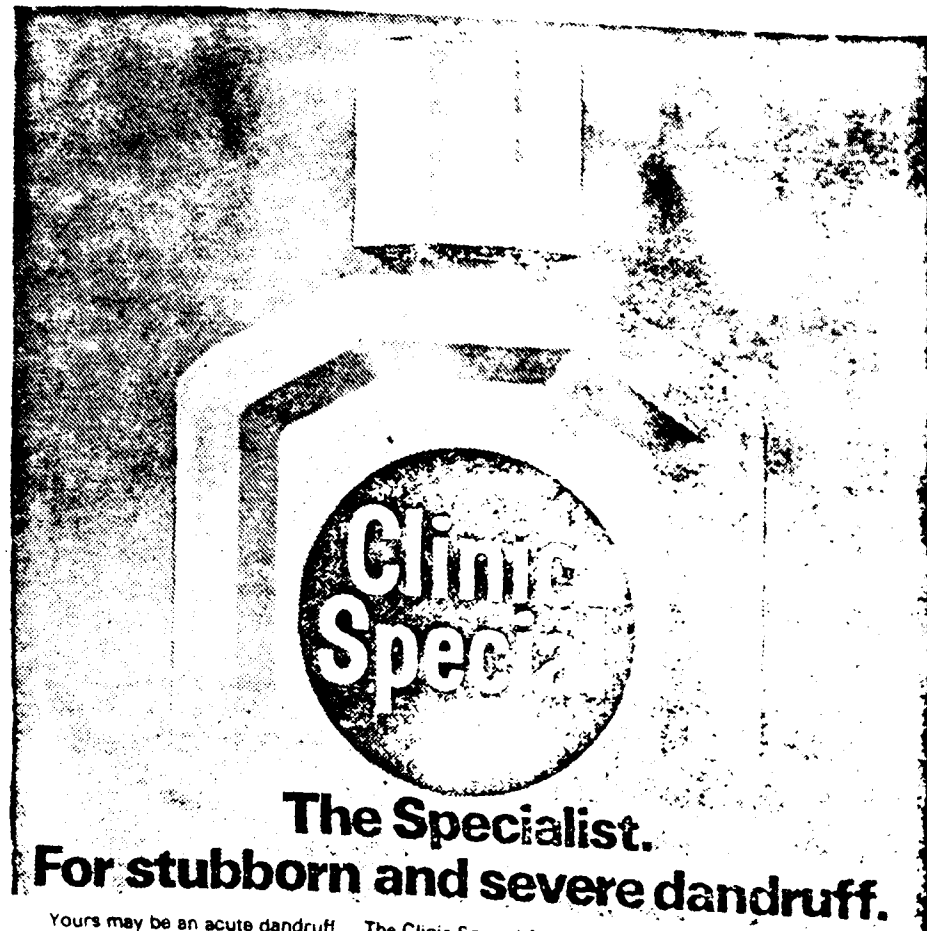
SOURIN ROY: A PERSONAL MEMOIR

S.C. SENGUPTA

WHEN I JOINED Presidency College, Calcutta in 1929 as the youngest teacher in the English department. I used to travel by bus to college from Kalighat. In those days, although Calcutta was a large and busy city, it was far less crowded than now. Bus journeys were not uncomfortable, passengers could carry on leisurely conversation, serious or chatty, without inconvenience to themselves or embarrassment to fellow-passengers. It was a moderately long journey from Kalighat to Presidency College, and a slim, carelessly dressed, soft-spoken student with a glint in his eyes whom I met frequently, would sometimes ask me pointed questions on Bernard Shaw. How this fellow-traveller in a bus had come to know of my interest in Shaw I cannot say even now, but the fact is that I had started working on Shaw for my doctorate—there was only one doctorate and no 'supervisor' in those days—and I had first an impression that this unkempt young man was a pert intellectual Bohemian who wanted to parade his interest in things fashionable and unacademic. Bernard Shaw in those days was not a part of academic studies, he was fashionable because he was looked upon as an eccentric who held contrary opinions on every subject. Indeed, my former teacher K. C. Mukherji, who at one time taught Greek at Oxford, told me that at Oxford he would not be considered respectable enough for a Doctorate dissertation.

As I came to know this young man more and more, I found that his questions were stimulating, and he was a man who was eager to know rather than to flaunt his scholarly interests. His name was Sourin Roy; he was a student of Presidency College, reading Honours in History. I was in charge of the Honours in men in English, with whom I had intimate contacts. Honours students in other Arts subjects had to do a three-paper course in English, and I had only to examine their scripts in periodical exercises. So it was only in a remote way that Sourin was my pupil, but our casual conversation in bus journeys soon ripened into warm friendship, and I can admit frankly that in this give-and-take relationship between teacher-and-pupil, I was always at the receiving end. Another bond of connexion was Snehalata Roy, his brother's daughter, who became my pupil when doing her B.A. Honours in English. Sourin died a bachelor last year when he was in his early seventies, a man without enemies, who was ready to do a good turn to all who came in contact with him, but his first concern was his

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avuncular duties. He was the youngest of three brothers, and left an orphan by the death of his father, he was called in the family Dukhiram, the unfortunate boy. As he was brought up by R. N. Roy, his second brother, a fine scholar and a successful lawyer, he became a doting uncle to all his nephews and nieces, especially to Snehalata, who shared all his cultural and scholarly interests, and was his companion in his saunterings in the world of books. It was Snehalata's death for which he thought his mistaken treatment was responsible and also the death of his young nephew Shekhar, which, I believe, hastened his own end. Why should I single out Sneha and Shekhar? Some months ago, Mira, the youngest of these nephews and nieces, who was with him during his last illness, told me that the sun had gone out of her life, because her parents had died when she was very young, and this uncle was both father and mother to her. I have just spoken of Shekhar's death a few months before Sourin's. Shekhar had a separate house where he lived with his wife, but everyday Sourin, himself a cardiac patient, would go and watch by his bedside for hours together. It would, however, be wrong to speak of him only as a devoted uncle, because his friendships were as warm as his family attachments. Only the other day a 'mutual friend' had to undergo a major operation, and he flooded me and the friend's wife with letters and telegrams from Delhi, because he felt that a wrong course of treatment had been adopted. The family did not heed his importunities and the friend is now in good health. But who can forget Sourin's passionate concern for a friend, whom he had not met for years and with whom, from a worldly point of view, his connexion was neither firm nor even very intimate.

It is, however, as a scholar that Sourin would live in the memory of his friends and acquaintances. He passed B.A. Honours and M.A. in History—both in the first class. But he was really a bibliophile, who matriculated among the old book shops of Calcutta and graduated in the National Archives of New Delhi. During his final years as a student in the University in Calcutta, we became very intimate—he and I and my friend P.K.B., whom I used to call 'Brother'. Brother was a student of Economics, who retired from the New Delhi Secretariat as a Joint-Secretary in the Finance Department. Although he was a hard-boiled bureaucrat, he had retained his academic interests, and he was, I remember, taken aback by Sourin's penetrating grasp of the subject as I had been taken aback a few years earlier by Sourin's knowledge of literature. Another common point of interest was Sanskrit, in which Sourin was a master and we two 'brothers' were amateurs. I still remember the mild shock of surprise with which I saw Sourin reading Sanskrit prose with the ease and facility with which I would turn over the pages of a Bengali novel.

Sourin passed M.A. in 1933-34, and after vegetating for some years in Calcutta, he went to New Delhi on a small job at the Directorate of National Archives, then called, I believe, the Office of the Keeper of Imperial Records.

Here he worked ceaselessly day in and day out and gradually rose to be its Deputy Director. He would have risen higher and risen more quickly if he had been more pliant, and I have reasons to believe, if he had been more alive to his own claims and less watchful of the interests of others. Although I saw his unfaltering, unwearied devotion to his work, I confess I am not competent to pass any opinion on his proficiency as an archivist. But wherever I met teachers of history who had been to the National Archives, they invariably testified to his amazing knowledge of the subject, and I seemed to grow visibly in their estimation when they heard of my intimacy with him and that I was one of his old teachers.

After Sourin settled down in Delhi, we often wrote to each other but our personal contacts became rarer and rarer. His elder brother and sister-in-law died, I believe, within a few years of each other, and the centre of the family shifted to Delhi. Indeed, during his last visit to Calcutta a few months before his death, he told me that he was coming back to the city of his boyhood and youth after a lapse of sixteen years, and he did, indeed, look like a stranger in this once familiar haunt. I should like to say a few words about his old days in Calcutta. Along with a friend of his, he wrote a book on the art of writing Bengali. The idea was entirely his, and on my recommendation, the suggestion was made by a publisher as a sort of a pot-boiler to a young man. He was asked to lay a brick, but Sourin produced a work of marble. His nearest model was Fowler's books on English Composition *Queen's King's English* and *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage*. Mounseieur Jourdain, a famous comic character in Molière, was amazed to hear that the language he had been speaking all his life was prose, not a recondite, learned discipline, but just the language in which people express themselves in ordinary conversation. The opposite delusion is more common. We all take our command of our mother tongue for granted and express ourselves in it clumsily in woolly phrases and limping or cumbrous sentences. Who knows Molière himself was double-edged in his raillery. It might be that he wanted to make as much fun of the simple 'citizen' who was eager to learn the mysteries of prose as of the self-complacent prigs who laughed at him, thinking that the prose one spoke and wrote in his native language had no mystery at all. This was true as much of the Bengali reading public in the twentieth century as of Molière's French audience in the seventeenth. But Sourin's book, though appreciated by a few men of taste, did not 'please the million'; it went out of print and is now forgotten. Some of my friends had a hearty laugh over a few impish remarks Sourin made in the essays—the book was *An Introduction to the Art of Essay Writing*—he wrote as models for students, and that was all.

At about this time Sourin was very close to me, and although fifty years have passed by, I gratefully remember the help received from him in at least two of my literary ventures. Himself a Shavian, he read over the manuscript of *The*

Art of Bernard Shaw, and when it was published, he compiled its Index. He was even more intimately associated with my Bengali book on Rabindranath Tagore, helping me with suggestions and criticisms, and when the book appeared, Snehalata designed the cover at the direction of uncle Sourin. While on the subject of Tagore, I cannot help retelling an episode that revealed Sourin's impishness and his ready wit. When he was at the top class of his school, there was a students' function, in which one of the items in the cultural programme was recitation of the poem 'Abhisar' by Tagore. When the headmaster, a crusty, squeamish old man, saw the item on the programme then about to be printed, he flew into a rage. As the word *Abhisar* in Bengali (or Sanskrit) ordinarily means a lover's tryst, he thought that it must be an indelicate poem, and it was his duty to put his foot down on such obscenity. Sourin, who knew that the old man had not read the well-known poem, undertook to change the item, and returning after some time, presented the revised programme which the headmaster gladly signed, because the objectionable item had been replaced by 'Sannyasin Upagupta' by Rabindranath Tagore. Now here is the poem (*Fruit-gathering*, No. XXXVII) which I shall summarize as far as possible in Tagore's own words: Sannyasin Upagupta (the first line of the poem 'Abhisar') lay asleep on the dust by the side of the city wall of Mathura.

Whose feet were those tinkling with anklets, touching his breast of a sudden? It was the dancing girl Vasavadatta, starred with jewels, drunk with the wine of youth. She lowered her lamp and saw the young face of the ascetic, austere beautiful.

'Come to my house,' said the woman, 'The dusty earth is not a fit bed for you.'

'Woman, go on your way, When the time is ripe I will come to you.'

(Later on in the year) Upagupta passed through the street and stood at the face of the rampart. What woman lay in the shadow of the wall, struck with the black pestilence (smallpox), her body spotted with sores, hurriedly driven away from the town.

The ascetic took her head on his knees and moistened her lips with water, and smeared her body with balm.... 'The time has at last come to visit you, and I am here', said the young ascetic to Vasavadatta, once a dazzling dancer, but now desolate and forsaken.

Everything was saved—the beautiful poem as well as the moral scruples of the irate but ignorant headmaster.

II

During the second and important period of Sourin's life, he became well-known in academic circles for his knowledge of ancient Indian history, archaeology, epigraphy and fine arts. I understand he wrote several papers and had also finished a longish manuscript which might be his *magnum opus*. I am told he was carrying on negotiations with publishers, who are always hesitant about spending money on books which scholars and specialists might appreciate but would be caviare to the general.

My mind moved in the old grooves—literature and literary theory, while Sourin, a born polymath, wandered over various fields. Yet we were in touch through correspondence and Sourin's letters, informative, illuminating and insouciant, were a delight to read. I was attracted by one feature of his wide-ranging studies—his flair for collecting literary, historical and biographical curios. Those who watched the correspondence columns of *The Statesman* and read letters written by Sourin under the pen-name of Ulysses Young, must have been regaled by many gems of wit and wisdom. Many of these he would also communicate to his intimate friends, and I hardly ever received a letter which did not contain some such entertainment. One example of 'the ignorance of the learned' leaps to my mind as I am writing these lines. When, in 1940, Oxford held a special Convocation at Santiniketan to confer on Tagore an honorary Doctorate of Literature, we were at the same time pleased and tickled. Such an honour, a year before the poet's death, seemed to be an unnecessary exercise, and also somewhat of an anti-climax. Some months before his own death, Sourin gave me the right clue to the mystery. In 1912-13, when Tagore was at the height of his popularity in England, some leading literary figures and Oxford dons proposed to Lord Curzon, or whoever else was the Chancellor of the University then, that an honorary D. Litt. be conferred on the poet. The Chancellor consulted Edward Dennison Ross who, as a member of the Indian Educational Service, had spent many years in Calcutta and was the Director of School of Oriental Studies in London. It was after hearing from E. D. Ross, an expert (!) on Indian affairs, that the University dropped the proposal. In 1940, Oxford just expiated the sin it had committed twenty-eight years earlier. Sourin suggested that the University became aware of its grievous omission only after the publication of the memoirs of Dennison Ross.

Sourin was my aide and mentor in the first decade of my literary activity. But after that although I received many entertaining and informative letters, which unfortunately I have not preserved, he had nothing to do with my work, and I could have been of little help to him in his own special field. But during the last few years, I had turned to history, and was busy tracing the origins of modern Indian nationalism when Sourin came to pay what proved to be his last

visit to Calcutta. He saw the problems I was wrestling with, and although he was a dying man then—I did not, however, see it—on going back to Delhi, he wrote to me interesting and illuminating letters which were of great value to me. The wheel seems to have come full circle: he was at my side once again! After a lifetime of strenuous labour, spent mostly for the benefit of others, he has gone to his rest, leaving us to mourn his loss.

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BRITISH CONNECTION WITH INDIA AS A FACTOR IN PRE-INDUSTRIAL CAPITAL ACCUMULATION IN ENGLAND

SOURINDRANATH ROY

A CONSIDERABLE BODY of opinion seems to have gathered around the view that profits from Indian trade was one of the main streams of that accumulation of capital in England which ignited the Industrial Revolution. An extreme form of the view is that it was the wealth that flew out of India as a consequence, first of British mercantile activities in, and later of British economic exploitation of, the country, that made possible Britain's dramatic leap into prosperity during the latter half of the 18th century. But while the broad framework of these formulations is distinct enough, no precise information is yet forthcoming either as to the nature or the extent of this economic drain or as to the exact role it might have played in whipping up an industrial spurt in England. Before one can make any serious use of these formulations, it is incumbent on him to find out the factual details basic to their understanding.

Any such undertaking has to be necessarily limited to that part of this outflow that can be definitely dated well before the first outburst of the Revolution. Any outflow of wealth post-dating the event could not have any causal connection with it, and hence clearly falls outside the scope of this quest. Arnold Toynbee in his classical volume on the Revolution fixed the time of the event about 1760. More recently, T.S. Ashton regarded this take-off date as lying somewhere between 1760 and 1780, for "after 1782 almost any series of production shows a sharp upward turn." In Hobsbawm's view the sharp uprising is noticeable in several major productive sectors even before 1770. All export industries, for instance, showed a growth of 76 p.c. between 1700 and 1750 and 80 p.c. between 1750 and 1770. The growth registered by cotton industry during the period was even more spectacular. Thus, the cotton consumption figure which was 1 million pounds in 1701 shot up to 3 million pounds in 1750 and to 476 million in 1771. Export of cotton goods rose in value from barely £6000 in 1710, and £16,000 in 1720, to £200,000 in 1764 and to £248,000 in 1765. The choice would thus seem to lie between 1760 and 1776. By 1780, as Christopher Hill has pointed out, 'we are already in the midst of the Revolution'. But even if we take 1780 as the turning point, we have still to fix the lower limit of the period of our enquiry at least 10 years ahead to allow a reasonable margin for the wealth drawn out of India to transform itself into industrial capital in England.

In fixing a lower limit for our period we need not go beyond the 2nd or the 1st decade of the 18th century. For this purpose we have to look for a time when the British hold on the eastern and Indian trade had already become firm enough to enable them to draw substantial wealth from India. This can hardly be true of the 17th century when both the volume and the value of total English trade with India were relatively insignificant⁵. The average annual value of the British merchandise export to India was no more than £15,000 between 1600-1620, whereas the average value of the export trade was £113,000 between 1721 and 1725 and £154,000 between 1731 and 1735⁶. Import from India which was £551,000 in value in 1700 shot up to £742,000 in 1716 and £996,000 during the 1730's.⁷ It is, therefore, extremely doubtful if the 17th century provided the British with much opportunity for assessing such fabulous wealth in India as could have an appreciable impact on the total domestic economy of Britain. Even assuming that the British trade connection did produce a drain during the period, it will still be difficult to argue that such a drain could have much to do with that capital accumulation in England which triggered off the economic explosion of the 70's and the 80's. Such a line of argument will oblige us to face the question: Why indeed such a long period of capital accumulation was necessary to bring about the explosion? Why was not the capital as it was being accumulated also invested into industrial ventures so that industry grew *pari passu* with the accumulation of capital? It is difficult to find any positive evidence in English history for such gradual industrialization. If, as is cogent to believe, British industrialisation came as a big spurt, and it was brought about largely by capital accumulation, we have to look for the evidence of this accumulation in a period close to that spurt and not in the possible long term effects of any accumulation that might have taken place more than a century earlier. For this purpose, roughly a forty-year or a fifty-year period preceding the spurt may be found to be suitable. In other words, we would be quite justified in limiting our enquiry to the period 1721-1760. To be on safer grounds we may at most extend the period to 1701-1770. But any further extension of it seems unwarranted.

In dealing with the question as to the precise manner in which the economic drain took place, it is important to recognise that there is no documented evidence of any actual remittance of specie or precious metal having ever formed a major part of the drain. It is alleged that £6 million was extorted by the Company and its employees as gifts from India between 1757 and 1766.⁸ But assuming that the whole of the sum went out of India, it is necessary to remember that the major part of it could have left the country only after it had been transformed into merchandise either on the Company's own account or in that of their servants. One of the main features of Indo-British trade was that import from India always tended to exceed British exports and E. I. Company was usually hard put to it to balance this deficiency. The total specie export to India

during the entire period of 1758-1766 was no more than £ 230,000, whereas import for the same period was about £ 11.276 millions.⁹ Since the merchandise export during the period was about £ 9 million there occurred a deficit of over £ 2 million which had somehow to be covered by money that could be extracted only from India. No specie in fact was exported from Britain either during the years 1767-1768 or in 1771 or 1781-3. Yet during the period the import figures were almost astronomical, and the huge deficits they registered could be met only with the money procurable in India. Thus the main channel through which the non-commercial earnings either of the Company or their servants could reach Britain was the channel of normal trade, and as a general rule it may be cogently argued that the only substantial drain from India in any year was represented by that part of British imports from India for which there was no equivalent export either in goods or specie.

The validity of this proposition is not impaired by the fact that after 1765 the Company acquired absolute power over the revenues of a large part of India, particularly of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, because any surplus whatever accruing from the revenues was from the very first intended to be and was actually applied to purchase merchandise for export to England. The immediate outcome of this new accession of wealth was the further enhancement of the existing deficit between export and import. It is true by an act of George III in 1767 (7 George III c 57) the Company was placed under a statutory obligation to pay a contribution of £ 400,000 to the British treasury annually. But this contribution was payable only for 7 years and the total sum paid on this account was no more than £ 2,169,000. Even this did not involve any direct remittance to England.¹⁰ The obligation was met out of the profit which the Company was making on the sale of their goods in London. There is thus no justification for counting the contributions separately from the economic drain which occurred during the period (i.e., 1768-75) through the normal trade channel.

We have to take into account in this connexion the earnings which must have accrued to Company's servants from their participation in the internal trade in India as well as the so called country-trade i.e., the India-based overseas trade with the Persian Gulf, South East Asia or China. The two major ways of making remittances of these earnings was (1) to transform them into merchandise that might be shipped in Company's own bottoms to London and (2) to buy bills of exchange on London. There was hardly any restriction on private trading till the Regulating Act of 1773, and even thereafter it could be carried on clandestinely with the acquiescence of the Company's representatives in India. But the tonnage available for the shipment of private merchandise was certainly restricted and even as late as 1769-70 the annual sale value of Indian imports on private account did not exceed £ 150,000.¹¹ The Company's bills of exchange provided a wider scope for sending money out of India. It was not till 1773 that the latter

was debarred from accepting bills of exchange exceeding £ 300,000.¹² Both Company's servants and British private traders could of course buy bills of exchange from Foreign agencies, or obtain respondentia bonds from foreign trading companies. The latter procedure was particularly risky as the bonds could be redeemed only after the issuing party had been able to sell in Europe the goods procured against the bonds. If the ship carrying the goods happened to get wrecked or damaged, the holder of the bonds was not entitled to any compensation. It is, therefore, doubtful if any large scale use was made of these foreign channels at any rate till Pitt's India Act and Lord Cornwallis's restrictive measures succeeded in imposing a more effective control on private trading by the Company's servants. The heyday of clandestine trading belongs to the period after 1783. It reached its climax only after the war with Tipu.

A word need be said about the debts incurred by the Company's administration in India as a possible source of further economic drain. The Company used to raise funds by selling bonds or issuing certificates. But so far as the money paid to the bond-holder by way of either interest or payment of principals was spent in India it certainly involved no drain. So far as it was utilised in purchasing merchandise for shipment to London or bills of exchange redeemable in England, it was accounted for in the normal outflow of goods in England. This could only have contributed a drain to the extent by which its amount exceeded the value of both goods and specie imported into India. It is important, however, to remember that during the period with which we are primarily concerned the Company's Indian administration had no occasion to run into heavy debts. The Company needed loans only when its expenditures showed an excess over its revenues. But till 1774 the Company's over-all financial position in India appears to have been on the whole sound. If the account of the Company's administration in India from 1761 to 1774 is taken into consideration it would become evident that during the period the latter obtained a surplus of about £2,250,000.¹³

We have thus to fall back on the view that the true drain from India stemmed from the chronic excess of British imports from India over British exports. An obvious source from which an idea could be gathered of the nature of the excess is the East India Company's own ledgers, a summary of which can be found in Macgregor's *Oriental Commerce*. But one of the chief limitations of these ledgers consists in the fact that they do not yield any information as to the invoice value of the merchandise imports received in London. What they do show is just their sale-value. The ledgers, moreover, omit to give any information in respect to the pre-1709 period. A more objectionable feature is that they do not take any account of the private trade relating to the period before 1767. By far the best source relating to the subject is the statistical returns compiled by the Inspector-General of Customs of Great Britain, from which it is possible to

prepare a long series, starting from the very beginning of the 18th century in respect to the invoiced value, both of British imports and exports inclusive of private trade as well as that carried on the Company's account. An analytical summary of these is available in Elizabeth Schumpeter's *magnum opus*, *English Overseas Trade Statistics, 1697-1808*. One serious omission of this compilation, from our point of view, is that it is totally silent on the amount of bullion that was exported to India during the period. But this lacuna could be filled in with the help of the data available in this respect in Macgregor.

One objection which may perhaps be raised against the statistics of both Schumpeter and Macgregor is that they have both lumped together the trade-figures in respect to India and China. But the reason of this is that both in East India Company's ledgers and in the Inspector-General of Customs's returns the China and India accounts were treated as a single item, and rightly so. China and India trades were intimately linked together till about 1793. Before 1750 China trade had little quantitative importance. Thereafter it was mainly financed by remittances from India. Chinese imports for this period could justifiably be regarded as indirect imports from India. The validity of this will become evident if one attempts an examination of the complicated relationship between the two trades for the crucial period 1762-71, a period during which the volume of the China trade reached for the first time a sizeable dimension.

A. Total trade of India & China (£ 000s omitted)

Period	British Merchandise	British specie	Total	Import to England	Balance
1762-65	3904	724	4628	4408	+ 220
1766-70	5500	767	6267	9120	- 2853
1771	912	202	1114	1753	- 639
Total:	10316	1693	12009	15281	- 3272

B. Total Trade of India

1762-65	3227	138	3365	2973	+ 392
1766-70	4179	20	4199	6634	- 2435
1771	400	-	400	1074	- 674
Total:	7806	158	7964	10681	- 2717

If we look at the figure of the combined India-China trade for the period, it will be seen that the total British merchandise export amounted in value to £ 10,316,000, bullion export to £ 1,693,000, and import to £ 15,281,000, leaving an adverse balance of £ 3,272,000. If we deduct from the above the China trade figures for the period as given in Robert Wisset's *Compendium of East India Affairs* (Vol. I) we arrive at the following figures for exclusive India trade:

British merchandise export: £ 7,806,000

Bullion export: £158,000.

British import from India: £ 10,681,000.

This would leave an adverse balance of £ 2,717,000. The difference between the two figures is about 0.555 millions which is attributable to excess imports from China. This excess, to all appearance, was financed by remittances from India. As a matter of fact Indian remittances to China from different sources amounted during this period roughly to 1.9 millions. It would thus on the whole be valid to maintain that the cost of imports from China during the period was largely met from Indian sources and for all practical purposes the two trades constituted a single whole. In our calculation of the economic drain from India we shall thus be perfectly justified in taking the two trades in combination. Such a line of approach hardly involves any risk of distorting our results materially. At worst we may err on the side of slightly exaggerating the figure of the drain. But the alternative is to take the risk of deflating the figure to some extent, a risk which ought to be avoided.

Subject to these limitations the figures presented below may be regarded as reliable as any statistical series obtainable for so early a period.

British Export (£ 000s omitted)

Period	Merchandise	Bullion	Total	Br. Import	Balance
1701-40	18,191	5,145	23,336	31,545	- 8209
1741-50	12,117	12,905	25,022	20,260	+ 4762
1761-70	1,518	10,380	11,898	14,630	- 2732
Total:	31,826	28,430	60,256	66,435	- 6179

It will be seen from the figures that the total British merchandise export during the period amounted of £ 31,826,000 in value while the bullion export during the same period can be estimated at about £ 28,430,000. The total export for the period, therefore, would work out to £ 60,256,000. This excess must have been balanced against funds procured in India and should be regarded as an economic drain. It is not a very impressive figure. But the position hardly alters

materially if we ignore the figure for the period from 1700 to 1757 (the period preceding Plassey) as being irrelevant to the question of pre-industrial accumulation and concentrate on the 25 years immediately preceding the take-off date (assuming that date as coinciding with circa 1780). Even in that case we can get a deficit of no more than £ 8,638 millions. The following table will illustrate this:

Total Export (£ 000s omitted)

Period	Including Bullion	Import	Balance
1756-60	5,743	4,890	+ 853
1761-70	11,898	14,630	- 2,732
1771-80	9,521	16,280	- 6,759
Total:	27,162	35,800	- 8,638

We can obtain a more impressive figure by adding to this deficit of £ 8,638,000, for the next decade (1781-90) viz., £ 8,552,000, so that the total for 1756-90 would be £ 17,190,000, but that would hardly be warranted for reasons already explained. Even if we accept this figure, it would yield an annual average of less than a million, which is nowhere near Digby's spectacular figure of £ 18 millions. It may be urged that in making these calculations we have failed to take into consideration the trade that was most certainly conducted during this period by smuggling.¹⁴ The ratio of this trade to normal trade has been calculated by Ashton as 1:6,¹⁵ and by Hill 1:3. But even if we take the higher ratio we can at the utmost add about an additional amount of 2.8 or 3 millions to the deficit for the period 1756-80. That would yield a total of barely £ 11.6 millions.

However impressive the drain may look in the context of its effect on Indian economy, it would hardly be substantial when compared with the total volume of the capital which flew into the major industrial sectors during the initial period of the Revolution. The investment in the cotton industry alone amounted to about £ 8 million during the 1780's, while the blast furnaces in operation about the same date represented a capital of £ 11 million, and this, as Habakkuk and Deane have calculated, constituted only half the total investments in the iron industry. Investment in the expanding coal industry in this period appears to have been much heavier, while the capital sunk in key industries like ship-building, engineering, woollen textiles, for example, was no less significant.¹⁶ It should also be recognised that what is indicated above relates only to the fixed capital and that the variable capital in most of these sectors probably equalled or

even exceeded the former. There are thus no strong grounds for supposing that the wealth which might have flown into these industries from Indian sources could in any sense have been very significant.

A more pertinent question is: was any substantial part of Indian wealth ('Indian plunders', as Christopher Hill picturesquely calls it) was in actual practice turned into industrial capital? There is hardly any known example of a Nabob ever metamorphosing himself into a captain of industry. Ashton has noted that "the early Iron Industry of South Wales was largely the creation of tea-dealers... of London and Bristol", thereby vaguely hinting at the possibility of the industry having been financed by Indian money. But one vainly looks for further instances of the kind. The truth seems to be that mercantile capital, as a rule, played a minimal role in the industrial expansion of the latter half of the 18th century. A large part of it was sunk in landed acres, stately homes and conspicuous consumption. As for the wealth of the Nabobs, much of it was spent on buying landed estates with stately homes or political immunity for the East India 'plunders'.¹⁷ True, the capital spent on buying lands passed into the hands of the sellers, who might invest productively, but what was spent on the purchase of stately buildings made a less direct contribution to economic development. A large part of the wealth became completely sterilized.

Leaving aside the question of the drain, it may be worth-while to consider what proportion of the total British overseas trade was made up by Britain's trade with the East during the period. The Schumpeter statistics indicate that during the first decade of the 18th century the ratio of the total export trade of Britain to her export to India was roughly about 60 to 1. During the fourth decade the ratio rose to 110:5, and to 150:8 during the forties. During the 1770's the ratio was roughly 170 to 9. The import ratio for the corresponding dates may be indicated as 47:7, 78:9, 98:10, 128:18. This would make it evident that even as late as the seventies Indian trade formed a relatively insignificant proportion of the total British overseas trade. So far as British export economy in Britain would primarily depend on the proportion the total British domestic export made up of the total national product. It has been reliably estimated that in the mid-eighteenth century this proportion amounted to no more than 12 per cent.¹⁸ Thus, even if Indian export figures were double or even treble of what is found in Schumpeter statistics, the impact of the trade on the national income of Britain could have been no more than marginal.

As for import, by far the largest portion of it (accounting for about 19 p.c. of the total British re-export) used to be re-exported. This trade thus completely bypassed the manufacturing sector, and apart from the employment of shipping, only impinged upon the Home economy in any broader way through mercantile

profits. Much of these, as we have already seen, was translated into 'stately homes' or other forms of unproductive or wasteful consumptions. Throughout our period this sector thus remained more or less as an enclave.¹⁹ It is doubtful, if in view of these considerations we would be justified in maintaining that increased income generated through the expansion of British overseas trade was automatically passed on, through a sort of multiplier mechanism, to induce expansion in other related sectors of the economy.

1. Cf. Brooks Adams *The Law of Civilisations and Decay* (New York, 1910) pp. 303-312; Also Tara Chand, *History of Freedom Struggle in India*. In a milder form the economist W.S. Jevons propounded the theory of the eastern origin of British economic prosperity ("Sun-spot and Commercial Crises", *Nature*, April 24, 1879).
2. *Lectures on the Industrial Revolution of the Eighteenth Century in England* (London, 1884), pp. 64, 204-5.
3. T.S. Ashton: *Economic History of England: the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1955).
4. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire* (London, 1969), p. 48.
5. Paul Mantoux, *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century* (revised edition, translated by Marjorie Vernon, (New York, 1927), pp. 258 & 313.
6. H. B. Morse, *The Chronicles of the East India Company trading to China* (Cambridge, Mass, 1926) Vol. I, p. 8.
7. Elizabeth B. Schumpeter, *English Overseas Trade Statistics, 1697-1808* (Oxford, 1960).
8. Christopher Hill, *Reformation to Industrial Revolution* (London 1969), p. 237.
9. Schumpeter, *op. cit.*, read together with "Tabular view of the Rise and Progress of Commerce and Navigation" in John Macgregor, *Oriental Commerce* (Parliamentary Papers: Commons 1847-48).
10. "Tabular Statement of the Contributions from the East India Company to the Public in England 1768-1812" in Macgregor, *op. cit.*
11. Macgregor, *op. cit.*
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*
14. W. S. Jevons was one among the first to propound that the British-Indian trade statistics relating to the 18th century were largely unreliable owing to their failure to take account of the very voluminous trade which was carried on through smuggling (See the article in *Nature* already referred to).
15. T. S. Ashton, Introduction to Elizabeth Schumpeter's *English Overseas Trade Statistics* (1697-1808), p. 6.
Against this one should note the view of E. Lipson, who considered it unlikely that clandestine trade ever contributed (*The Economic History of England*, Vol. II, pp. 23-28).
16. H. J. Habakkuk and P. Dane "The take-off in Britain" in W.W. Rostow, ed. *The Economics of Take-off into Sustained Growth*. London, 1963, p. 75.
17. Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 245.
18. M. W. Flinn, *Origins of the Industrial Revolution* (Third impression, London, 1969), p. 57.
19. See on this point K. E. Berrill "International Trade and the Rate of Economic Growth", *Economic History Review* Second Series 12.

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BRITISH ECONOMIC PENETRATION INTO NORTH EASTERN HILLS: OVERLAND TRADE AND ALLIED QUESTIONS, 1800-1850

CHITTABRATA PALIT

THE ANGLO-NEPALESE WAR of 1814-16 is conventionally described as a British move to contain Gurkha aggression on the British Indian border territory of Basti and Gorakhpur.¹ A deeper probe has, however, revealed British designs on Nepal under Gurkha rule since 1768. The East India Company intended to revive the fabled Nepal trade and open up China through Nepal and Tibet. The Kinloch and Logan expeditions had tried to subvert Prithvinarayan's Gurkha rule by effectively siding with the Newar Raja Joyprokash Malla.²

The British attempted systematic penetration into the eastern sector of the Himalayan trade during the time of Warren Hastings. Hastings in a minute of 19th April, 1779 had outlined his long-term northern policy: 'Like the navigation of unknown seas which are exploited not for the attainment of any certain or prescribed object but for the discovery of what they may contain, in so remote a search, we can only propose to adventure for possibilities.'³ Hastings planned the missions of Bogle (1774 & 1779), Turner (1783), Purangir Gossain (1785) to Tibet and Hamilton (1775) to Bhutan. Markham writes: 'The opening of the road through Nepal and obtaining the abolition of the duties and exactions which have lately been imposed on trade in that country, appears an object of great importance towards establishing a free communication between Bengal and Tibet'.⁴

His policies were kept up by Cornwallis who through the instrumentality of Jonathan Duncan, Resident at Benares, secured a commercial treaty with Nepal on 1st March, 1792 which agreed on a reciprocal duty of 2½% on exports and imports between India and Nepal and indemnity in case of robbery and theft. The treaty was silent on trade with Tibet. Nepal had wooed British assistance in view of Nepal's war with Tibet. But the British would not side with Nepal and be rather friendly with Tibet. Nepal broke off ties and however Captain Kirkpatrick, Cornwallis's special emissary, might try to repair Anglo-Nepalese relations, he received a rebuff. The Gurkhas were suspicious of British solicitude for Tibet and refused to commit military assistance. In the words of D.R. Regmi, "it delayed British infiltration into Nepal for at least another fifty years."⁵

Kirkpatrick, however, had made a clumsy survey of the trade routes in Nepal

and observed that 'the woollen staples of Great Britain' and 'warm flannels of the finer sort' had unlimited prospect in trans-Himalayan commerce through Nepal. In his memorandum, he urged: 'If we wish to push our commercial speculation into the western parts of Tibet... we must for this purpose turn our eyes towards Nepal....' Nepalese hostility is ascribed by him to 'unremitted jealousy with which the administration had all times discouraged the free ingress of strangers.'

Kirkpatrick was followed by Abdul Kadir in 1795 who found Nepalese brokers between Indian merchants and Tibetan counterparts doing brisk business. The trade pact of 1792 would have undersold them. Hence, the Nepal Durbar kept it inoperative. He suggested direct trade with China and Tibet bypassing Nepal. The next explorer was Captain Knox who in the wake of the Treaty of 1801 went to the Durbar with instructions to obtain information about the valuable mineral and agricultural products of Nepal, the possibility of introducing European and Indian manufacture there and opening trade with Tibet and Bhutan.

Walter Hamilton in his Gazetteer noted how European copper was driving Nepal copper out of market and how the jealousy and ignorance of Nepal administration stood in the way of an extensive traffic between Tibet and the British territories.⁷

The above sketch of calculated commercial penetration should explain why the Gurkhas were wary of British intentions. Nepal suffered from anxiety and not jealousy and ignorance. She was studiously undermined. As one sober British surveyor, Dr. Francis Buchanan-Hamilton, was to point out candidly, 'I am indeed persuaded from having seen a good deal of people in this state of society that all interference of other Governments by treaty does injury and that all the merchants will suffer less and push the trade further, if left entirely to their own exertions.'⁸

It was no wonder, therefore, that Bhim Sen Thapa (1806-37) determined to build 'an Asian front, against the growing British colonialism'.⁹ Add to that the candid remarks of Brian Hodgson, Assistant Resident at the Durbar, on the commerce of Nepal in 1831-32: 'It is scarcely necessary for me to remark that a connection was originally sought by us purely for commercial purposes, which purposes the Government, upto the beginning of this century, directly and strenuously exerted itself by arms and by diplomacy, to promote.'¹⁰

The background of the Anglo-Nepalese War of 1814-16 can now be seen in better light. The Gurkhas sought to break the cordon of trading outposts which subverted Nepalese trade and paid the penalty by being defeated at the hands of the British and surrendering choice areas in the western, central and

eastern Himalayas in the Treaty of Sagauli (1816). British success only whetted her desire to monopolise Himalayan trade across Tibet to China. To that task, Hodgson was engaged for 20 years of his life. He visualised a commercial empire for the British spreading over from India through Nepal and Tibet to China. He 'secretly and carefully applied to some of the oldest and most respectable merchants of Kathmandu and the other chief towns of the valley for conjectural estimates of the total annual amount of imports and exports and the number and capital of the chief commercial towns of the valley.'¹¹

He located '52 native and 34 Indian merchants engaged in foreign commerce both with the South and the North' and found 'that the trading capital of the former' was 'not less than 50,18,000 nor that of the latter less than 23,05,000.' A third of these merchants were natives of the plains. 'Many native merchants of Benares have established flourishing kothees at Kathmandu; the Cashmirians of Patna have had kothees there for ages past... lakhs of the natives of Oude, Behar and north-eastern Bengal of all ranks and conditions, annually resort to Kathmandu to keep the vernal festival at Pasupatikshetra. Businessmen of Benares have more than 10 kothees at Kathmandu while Bengal merchants have abstained.... The native merchants at Calcutta have, whilst there, a hard struggle to maintain with their European rivals in trade but at Kathmandu they have no such formidable rivalry to contend with. Because Europeans not attached to the Residency have no access to the country....but every native is free to enter Nepal at leisure.'¹²

Hodgson was not content with the Anglo-Nepalese trade which averaged about 26 lakhs sicca rupees. He sketched a route from Calcutta to Peking of 2880 miles in about 87/90 stages at the end of which 'the merchant enters Setchuen, the commercial province of China onto Yangtze and Hoangho where he may sell his European and Indian products and purchase tea or silk or other products of China.' Hodgson was the *avant-garde* of British colonialism in Asia, ready to move the most insurmountable mountain in the world. The schemer writes: 'But England and China and not Calcutta and China, it may be argued, must be the sites of the production and consumption of the truly valuable articles of commerce of which the Nepalese and Indians would have little more than the carrying trade....Let the native merchant of Calcutta and of Nepal...take up this commerce and whilst we, though not the immediate movers, shall yet reap the great advantage of it.'¹³

Hodgson's exhortation to Bengalee merchants was mainly to use them as the errand-boys of colonialism and not to foster them.

Hodgson saw Tibet as a happy hunting ground for British commerce. 'With her musk, her rhubarb, her borax, her splendid wools, her mineral and animal

wealth, her universal need for good woollens and her incapacity to provide herself or to obtain supplies from any of her neighbours, Tibet may well be believed capable of maintaining a large and valuable exchange of commodities with Great Britain through the medium of our Indian subjects and the people of Nepal.' Hodgson showed the way to intra-Asian country trade through the hills which was the main line of profit for the British in India. He even chalked out the details of the route, manners, cost of carriage and the nature and amount of duties levied by the Nepal Government *en route* to Lhasa. Reviewing trade through Nepal, Hodgson apprises the Government of the enormous demand for English broadcloth in Tibet, popularity of British imitations of Indian handkerchief and cashmere shawls among the middle and lower orders in Nepal, use of English chintzes and finer cotton fabrics among the upper and middle classes.

He further informs that satins, silks and velvets of China were giving way before British broadcloths and velvets. Indigo and opium were in great demand in Tibet. There was demand also for British guns, scissors, mirrors, wall shades, chandeliers, tumblers, wine glasses. The people in Nepal were beginning to use British crockery and glassware at their tables. The Tibetans already used British plates and dishes.¹⁴

Of the exports from the hills, major items were gold of the value of Rs. 175,000, musk (Rs. 55,000), copper pice (Rs. 2,50,000), elephants (Rs. 67,000), horses (Rs. 45,000), timber (Rs. 3,00,000). On another important item, paper, Hodgson writes: 'the paper of Nepal is an admirable article which ought to be substituted for flimsy paper of the plains for the records of every office in Bengal.' He highlights tea to be had from Lhasa 'in any quantity'. 'The Nepalese saul forest is an inexhaustible mine of timber', writes Hodgson. Copper coins were supplied in bulk from Nepal to the plains. There were lead, sulphur and zinc mines in Nepal but no skill to work them profitably. The net produce of rice of the lowlands of Nepal was exported to Patna chiefly on Government account, which paid for luxuries of British India imported by Nepal. Still the hills had adverse balance of trade against British India.¹⁵ This was so by over 4 lakhs as a result of British economic penetration.¹⁶

It is interesting to note from the Table illustrating Trade of Nepal that huge quantities of indigenous goods were sold by Indian merchants in Nepal. Country chintzes from Tanda, Bareilly, Furrakabad, Dacca Jamdani, Muslins of Behar, Santipur, Chandrakona, Sahans of Dacca, Santipur, Kora cloth of Darbhanga, Jahanabad etc., Dacca turban, Maldah cloth, Murshidabad cloth, Banaras Kinkhabs, Cashmere shawls, Bengal silk thread, pan of Bihar and Bengal, tatee horses and buffaloes were regular items of trade and accounted for more than half of the import trade. This had a special significance for the plains economy. Overland trade was one of the major outlets through which the so-called subsistence economy responded to market forces from pre-British times. The

economy was sufficiently monetised and the mercantilist policies of the Company could not prevent the commercial operations of the Indian merchants through the hills. De-industrialisation was, therefore, less complete than supposed and commercialisation of an agrarian economy was not all due to British thrust to find investments for Europe. It had grown spontaneously and created elbow-room for the Indian merchants to grow and run a parallel economy with the British.

British economic penetration to Nepal, however, meant adverse balance of trade for her, underselling of her merchants and decline of local industries like copper, iron and other indigenous wares. Worst of all, surveillance and subversion of the Durbar by the British Resident at Kathmandu, attempts to use Nepal as a transit station for trade with China and Tibet to the exclusion of Nepal, repeated trade missions pressurising her to accept commercial treaties under veiled threat compromised Nepal's independence.

The way Hodgson tried to thrust the treaty of 1835 on Nepal proved irksome to Bhim Sen Thapa. He was overzealous and peremptory in his demand for a bilateral treaty. But the Durbar was unwilling to co-operate. To the British, it was Nepalese obstinacy and ignorance. But it was Nepal's business which the British could not dictate.¹⁷

Nepal remained under the British umbrella throughout the period under review. The rise of Rana polity in Nepal and prompt British recognition of Jang Bahadur (1846-77) as the prime minister turned the scale in favour of the British. Jang Bahadur helped the British during the Sikh War (1848-49) and the Revolt of 1857. One of his reasons as he stated in his Despatch to the Government of India was in his own words 'that I know the power of the British Government and that put against it, although I might have temporary success for a time my country would afterwards be ruined and the Gurka dynasty annihilated.'

We have taken a good look at Hodgson to understand the nature of British economic penetration into Nepal. But his reports remain inexhaustible for other allied questions. Hodgson in another paper on colonisation of the Himalayas, urged the Government to take up colonisation of the Hills for a number of shrewd reasons. He writes: 'I trust... that the general subject of the high capabilities of the climate and soil of the Himalayas and their eminent fitness for European colonisation having once been taken up will never be dropped till colonisation is a *fait accompli* and that the accomplishment of this greatest, surest and soundest and simplest of all political measures for the stabilisation of the British power in India may adorn the annals of Lord Canning's administration.' His main idea was to use the Hills as the European habitat nearing home weather and as the headquarters for 'drawing forth the natural resources of the

region like timber, drugs, dyes, hides, horns, ghee and silk.' The European colony would be a godsend to the striving peasantry of Ireland and Scotch highlands and they would serve as a 'far more durable, safe and cheap barrier against Russian aggression than expenses of war against Russia in Persia.'

The value of tea as a cash crop in the Himalayas was noticed by Hodgson, and for 25 years it was nurtured by him in the Residency garden into 'an indigenous and most abundant species'. Seeds were procured from China and planted in Kathmandu. These broad hints from Hodgson were well taken by Campbell who began developing Darjeeling into such an European settlement during his residency. Darjeeling was Sikkim territory occupied by the Gurkhas and returned to her by the British after the War of 1816 following Gurkha expulsion from that hill. In 1835, it was taken back from Sikkim to build a British sanatorium to make Hodgson's dream a reality. A compensation was paid to the Sikkim Raja. This was the beginning of the subversion of Sikkim. Because of frequent trespasses into Sikkim by Campbell, Superintendent of Darjeeling, and Hooker, the Botanist at the Residency, Campbell was imprisoned by the Sikkim Durbar. A military expedition was sent against the Raja to release Campbell in 1850. As a penalty, the revenue paid for Darjeeling (Rs. 50,000) was stopped and Sikkim was further deprived of the Lower Morung territory bearing Rs. 36,000 as revenue and a portion of the Hill. Thus, Sikkim was badly fleeced for questioning her stealthy subversion. The Raja was reduced to abject poverty. As Welby Jackson in his report on Darjeeling noted in 1854, 'the political relations with the Sikkimis have been much contracted as well as facilitated by the appropriation of the Morung tract by the British Government. In consequence of his outrage on the representative of the Government, the Raja is now almost without revenues and is a supplicant to the British Government for a pension.'¹⁹ This is an example of ruthless frankness.

The petition of the Raja is a telling document. He prays for restoration of his land and compensation and assures good conduct. He begs to be excused for the ill behaviour of his father's servants and craves generosity of the Company's Government.²⁰

Campbell's comment on the petition exposes the British motives behind severity of penalty on the Sikkim Raja whose whole revenue was confiscated. Campbell writes: 'Freedom of travel in Sikkim now in abeyance and the trade with Tibet to be relieved from all exactions and hindrances in transit would greatly improve the resources of Darjeeling and add to its attractions as a sanatorium. If the Raja would agree to both and satisfy us...the generosity of Government might then be exhibited by a small annual gratuity to the present Raja so long as his good conduct deserved it.' Welby Jackson offers the gloss on it in his approval of the suggestion to grant pension if free travel and protection to all per-

sons travelling under the care of British Government were conceded for private adventures.²¹ He continues: 'the present disturbed state of the Chinese Government affords a good opportunity of breaking through the obstacles it has hitherto thrown in the way of travellers and of merchants bringing their goods from Tibet into the British dominions... Free access into Tibet through the Sikkim territories would seem to be the best mode of effecting this. The road is well known from Darjeeling to Lhasa...the distance is estimated at a month's journey and the two large towns, Phari with a population of 4000 and Geanchii Shubur with a population of 20,000 lie on the road. The value of imports into the British dominions by this route is now estimated at Rs. 50,000 annually and no doubt it might be greatly increased were greater facilities offered to the merchant.'²²

The intransigence of the Nepal Government stood in the way of converting Nepal into an European mart and centre of transit route to Tibet and China. Darjeeling to Lhasa through Sikkim provided an alternative route. So, Sikkim was systematically subverted on one pretext or the other especially when China was in distress around the fifties of the 19th century.

So strong was the commercial greed that the British did not give up the lower and the upper Morung even after their acquisition of the trade route to Lhasa. Cotton, rice, hemp, jute etc. were commercially produced in these areas for trans-Himalayan and plains trade. Cotton from American seed was especially promoted. It was expected to raise the production from 3000 maunds to 60,000 maunds.²³ Darjeeling acquired a new importance in the changed circumstances. Hodgson was vindicated. It was rapidly organised as a commercial headquarter for Himalayan trade and European health resort. The route to Lhasa was mapped out by Campbell.²⁴

Tea cultivation was avidly taken up. Campbell saw to its culture in the Superintendent's nurseries. Upwards of 2000 plants were growing from 7000 to 2000 ft. altitude of different ages from 12 years to seedlings of a few months. He sought the expertise of Mr Fortune on deputation to China by the Court of Directors during his return journey to Calcutta for better culture of the plant in the hills. The hill-station was steadily built up from the 1860s under the energetic J. W. Edgar, Deputy Commissioner, Darjeeling, and C. E. R. Girdlestone, Resident of Nepal. New serpentine roads encircling terraced residential areas came with amazing rapidity through local funding. The queen of the hill stations was thus a byproduct of colonial exigency. The Darjeeling—Lhasa route through Sikkim in lieu of Nepal route which lay in abeyance because of 'rigid facts of geography and variable facts of politics' made Darjeeling a reality from the brain-child she was of Brian Hodgson.²⁵ The Anglo-Sikkimese treaty on 28th March, 1861 was the pinnacle of British success in economic penetration into the north eastern hills. Article VIII abolished all restrictions on travellers and monopolies in

trade between the British territories and Sikkim. A free reciprocal intercourse and full liberty of commerce were assured.²⁶ This was the euphemism for the complete subversion of Sikkim by the British.

NOTES

1. P. Spear, *A History of India*, Vol. II (London, Pelican edition, 1973), p. 565 also P. E. Roberts, *History of British India* (3rd edition, London, 1953), p. 280
2. K. C. Chaudhuri, *Anglo-Nepalese Relations* (Calcutta, 1950), pp. 13-33, also D. R. Regmi, *Modern Nepal* (Calcutta, 1961), pp. 69-76
3. N. K. Sinha, *Economic History of Bengal* (Calcutta, 1970), pp. 46-50
4. C. R. Markham, *Narratives of the Mission of George Bogle to Tibet etc.* (London, 1876), p. 205
5. Regmi, *op. cit.*, p. 160
6. Kirkpatrick quoted in Jahar Sen, *Anglo-Nepal Trade in the 19th Century* (Calcutta, 1977), pp. 23-24
7. W. Hamilton, *East India Gazetteer* (London, 1815), p. 607
8. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 26
9. G. C. Sastri, *Historical Glimpses of Modern Nepal* (Kathmandu, n.d.), pp. 25-31; also Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 6
10. Brian Hodgson, *Papers relative to the Colonization, Commerce, Physical Geography, Science and Culture of the Himalaya Mountains and Nepal* Selections from the Records of the Govt. of Bengal, No. XXVII (Calcutta, 1857), No. II, *Papers relative to the Commerce of Nepal*, 1831-32, p. 11.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 18-30.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-39.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 14 & 47.
17. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
19. Hodgson, Paper No. I *On the Colonization of the Himalaya by Europeans* in *supra* 10
20. Welby Jackson, *Report on Darjeeling, being No. XVII of Selections from the Records of the Bengal Govt.* (Calcutta, 1854), p. 3.
21. *Ibid.*, Appendix I.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*, Appendix II.
26. Sen, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

A RECONSIDERATION OF ĀLUṆGAṆAM

Y. SUBBARAYALU

The term *āluṅgaṇam* has two segments, viz., the relative participle 'āluṅ' meaning 'that rules' and *gaṇam* (obviously equivalent to the Sanskrit term *gaṇam*) meaning group of assembly. So *āluṅgaṇam* means 'the ruling group'. It is usually written as *āluṅgaṇattār* '(those of the *āluṅgaṇam*') in Tamil inscriptions. This village body met with in the inscriptions of early medieval Tamilnadu was studied by K. A. Nilakanta Sastri¹ and C. Minakshi² in their respective works on the Chōlas and Pallavas. Nilakanta Sastri considered this as an executive body of the *ūr*, the corporate body of general (peasant) villages, and in some instances as a simple executive of the *sabhā*, the corporate body of the *brahmadēya* or Brahman villages. Minakshi after posing the question 'what was the actual degree of relationship between the *sabhā* and *āluṅgaṇam*', answers very confidently that "the latter (i.e., the *āluṅgaṇam*) was the executive body and carried out functions of varied nature ranging from control and regulation of land-holdings, management of temples, charities, collection and remission of taxes, serving as investment banks for receiving deposits of money and looking after the cultivation of lands". A perusal of the very same inscriptions that these authors handled does not help us in any way to concede the correctness of the above sweeping statements.

There are available among the published inscriptions about forty-six inscriptions relating to the *āluṅgaṇam* (excluding a few fragmentary ones) from twenty-nine villages (See appended Table).³ Spatially the inscriptions are found in the six districts of Chittoor, Chingleput, North Arcot, South Arcot, Thanjavur and Tiruchirapalli. The two northern districts of Chingleput and North Arcot (the central Pallava territory) have more than half of these inscriptions. So far no inscription has been noticed from south Tamilnadu, i.e., the Pandya country. Temporarily the bulk of them are found in the ninth and tenth centuries, one in the 8th century, some in the 11th century and very few thereafter. The earliest yet known inscription referring to *āluṅgaṇam* comes from Gudimallam, Chittoor District and is dated in A.D. 754.⁴

It is rather puzzling to see that Nilakanta Sastri concluded that *āluṅgaṇam* is the executive body of the peasant corporate assembly *ūr*. Because in all the known instances *āluṅgaṇam* is found associated only with the Brahman villages and in two-thirds of the instances the Brahman assembly *sabhā* is found along with this in one related context or another. There is not a single occurrence of *āluṅgaṇam* in general peasant villages.

Another striking fact is that *āluṅgaṇam* is not even once found functioning

in the capacity of a corporate body. Its corporate nature is only inferred from the form it is referred to always, i.e., *āḷuṅgaṇattār* meaning 'those of the *āḷuṅgaṇam*'. In all these cases an individual is mentioned as 'one among those of the *āḷuṅgaṇam*'/*āḷuṅgaṇattāru*. These individuals are considered by scholars as the members of the respective *āḷuṅgaṇam*. This may be so. But such practice of referring to somebody as a 'member' of a corporate body is peculiar to this body alone. For in the case of other such village bodies as *ūrār*, *sabhā* and *mūla-parishad* individual members are not referred to as such. For instance, we never come across an instance mentioning separately some individual as member of a *sabhā*. On the other hand the members of the other bodies are found only in a collective gathering engaged in a collective function.

As to the functions of *āḷuṅgaṇam* we have very little information. There is no evidence at all to verify its 'functions of varied nature' suggested by Minakshi. The so-called members of the *āḷuṅgaṇam* are found acting in their individual, personal capacity only. An inventory of their activities breaks up as follows: Nine persons sell their lands to somebody (individual or collective body like *sabhā*); six persons purchase lands from somebody; nine persons donate lands to temple or some charity; seven others donate gold or sheep to temples; the remaining thirteen people appear as fathers or husbands, their sons or wives, as the case may be, in turn being mostly donors. They are all Brahmins without exception. And, as already observed by Minakshi and Nilakanta Sastri, they are very learned Brahmins, as seen from their names. About a third of them is made up of *kramavittans* (i.e., *kramavid*, 'those who have mastered the *kramapāṭha*) and others include *bhaṭṭa*, *sōmayāji*, *dasapuri*, and *sarvakratu*, all associated with some Vedic ritual. Two persons have the official titles *brahmarāja* and *brahmādhirāja* respectively and so seem to be government officials.

Apart from the *āḷuṅgaṇam* there were some other *gaṇams* like the *rudra-gaṇam*, *kāli-gaṇam*, *chāṭṭa-gaṇam*, *puṇya-gaṇam*, *amrita-gaṇam*, *Kāṭṭigai-gaṇam*, etc. in the *brahmadēya* villages.⁵ They are found only up to about A.D. 1000. As these names suggest, they were all groups connected with the maintenance of some temple or charity. Actually there is some direct evidence in this regard.⁶ In some cases the *āḷuṅgaṇam* and the other *gaṇams* were existing simultaneously in one and the same village, besides the *sabhā*. The famous Uttaramēru-chaturvēdimāṅalam was one such village.

As noted earlier the *āḷuṅgaṇam* is found along with the *sabhā* in many *brahmadēya* villages. Only in one instance a person who is a member of the *āḷuṅgaṇam* is also mentioned as the member of the *sabhā*.⁷ (Incidentally this being dated in 1204 is one of the few late inscriptions). Here there is no clue to connect *āḷuṅgaṇam* with the *sabhā* in any administrative network. In the rest of the inscriptions also the independent nature of the *āḷuṅgaṇam* can be

understood without much effort.

There is some evidence in a Pallava inscription⁸ to understand the *gaṇam* as a corporate body. In this inscription dated 768 (Paiyanur, Chingleput District) the *gaṇam* of a village called Payinur transacted a village business almost like the *sabhā*. The meeting of this *gaṇam* was called *kūri* as in the case of *sabhā*. But here the body is just '*gaṇam*' not *āḷuṅgaṇam*. Even though this evidence is not sufficient to support the identity of the *gaṇam* with *āḷuṅgaṇam*, it may indirectly hint at the actual nature of the latter.

The foregoing information may be interpreted in the following way. Certainly the *āḷuṅgaṇam* was only a Brahmanical institution. The *sabhā* was not the sole village institution concerned with the local affairs of the Brahman villages in the beginning. There were many corporate bodies consisting of learned Brakmans to deal with some particular issues, religious as well as secular. *Āḷuṅgaṇam* was one such body. Once the *sabhā* with its more elaborate constitution modelled on *Dharmaśāstra* prescription came into vogue, these older institutions lost their original significance and became defunct or survived with restricted functions. The reason for treating the *āḷuṅgaṇam* as an older brahmanical institutions in Tamilnadu is that the name is partly Tamil and partly Sanskrit. In the early stages the Brhman immigrants into Tamilnadu were few in number and so they would have been quickly 'Tamilized'. In course of time this process was reversed when more and more immigrants entered the large number of Brhman settlements were established under royal patronage. With more vigorous Sanskritization, northern institutions began to bear Sanskrit names only.

Finally, the implication of this study is obvious. That is, before accepting and elaborating the ideas and theses of our pioneer historians, however erudite and fastidious they may be, more rigorous analysis of the original sources is necessary.

NOTES

- 1 *The Colas*, 2nd ed. (Madras: University of Madras, 1955), p. 494.
- 2 *Administration and Social Life Under the Pallavas*, revised ed. (Madras: University of Madras, 1977), p. 152.
- 3 There is some difficulty in recognizing the original views of the author in the revised edition due to indiscriminate interpolation of additional matter by K. K. Pillay who prepared this edition. But there is no discrepancy as far as the matter on *āḷuṅgaṇam* is concerned.
- 4 *SII* (—South Indian Inscriptions), Vol. III, No. 1, Vol. IV, No. 327; Vol. V, Nos. 573-74, 854, 873; Vol. VI, Nos. 285, 294, 314, 337, 341, 350, 370, 372, 374; Vol. VII, Nos. 32-34, 110, 415, 443, 872; Vol. VIII, No. 241; Vol. XII, Nos. 84, 107, 109; Vol.

XIII, Nos. 83, 113-14, 193, 202, 262, 272, 287, 292, 303; Vol. XVII, No. 298. Vol. XIX, Nos. 22, 127, 281, 318, 319, 359, 373, 418. *EI* (Epigraphia Indica), Vol. XI, No. 22A & B.

The above data is collected from inscriptions published with texts, which are about 4,500. For comparison it may be noted that there are available about six hundred inscriptions from 150 Brahman villages referring to *sabhā*.

4. *EI*, Vol. XI, No. 22 A.
5. *SII*, Vol. XIII, No. 131; VIII, No. 655; III, No. 6; VII, No. 810; XII, No. 87-88, 91. XIII, No. 303.
6. For instance the *Kāli-gaṇam* is said to be in charge of the temple of *Piḍḍi* (an aspect of *Kāli*) *SII*, Vol. VIII, No. 655.
7. *SII*, Vol. VII, No. 415.
8. *SII*, XII, No. 34.
9. For the role of the *Dharmaśāstras* on the constitution of the *Sabhā* see K. V. Subrahmanya Aiyer, *Historical Sketches of Ancient Dekhan*, Vol. II (Coimbatore: K. S. Vaidyanathan, 1967), pp. 209-76.

TABLE

(a) Distribution of Inscriptions of *Āḷuṅgaṇam*

District	Period*				Total
	I	II	III	IV	
Chingleput	10	4	—	2	16
North Arcot	9	2	1	—	12
Chittoor	2	—	1	—	3
South Arcot	1	2	—	—	3
Thanjavur	7	—	—	—	7
Tiruchirapalli	5	—	—	—	5
Total	34**	8	2	2	46

(b) Distribution of Places with *Āḷuṅgaṇam*

Chingleput	4	3	—	2	9
North Arcot	4	2	1	—	7
Chittoor	1	—	1	—	2
South Arcot	1	2	—	—	3
Thanjavur	6	—	—	—	6
Tiruchirapalli	2	—	—	—	2
Total	18	7	2	2	29

* Period I—A.D. 850-985 II—986-1080 III—1071-1178 IV—1179-1279

** This includes one inscription dated in 754

IDEOLOGY OF A REVOLUTIONARY SECRET SOCIETY: ANUSHILAN SAMITI, 1902-1918

PRADYOT KUMAR GHOSH

THE ANUSHILAN SAMITI, sometimes described as the *Dacca Anushilan Samiti*, was a model revolutionary secret society having an excellent organizational network in Bengal and some other parts of eastern and northern India before the end of the World War I. The *Samiti* had its origin at the beginning of the twentieth century and it grew up secretly with surprising rapidity. Time and again it was referred to in the records of the Government as the most powerful of all secret societies in India. During 1907-1918 its members committed, on the average, one murder and one dacoity a month. On five occasions its members had open and violent clash with the police leading to several deaths. The Government, however, seemed powerless to cope with this spell of disciplined and determined violence.

The phenomenon of revolutionary violence shocked everyone concerned. It caught the Government napping. Nobody could expect violence to come out of an apparently complacent *Babu* culture. It was sudden, curious and puzzling. Yet the *Samiti* was not a band of criminals. It represented a sub-culture with an ideology, although somewhat questionable, of its own.

The name *Anushilan Samiti* as it is commonly held was derived from the novelist Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya's work *Anushilan*. The book is a masterpiece outlining the gigantic dream of a visionary. It called for cultivation of the physical and moral qualities of man to perfection. The concept of *Anushilan* stood for a structure of values that impelled one to seek happiness in harmonizing bodily vigour, devotion and knowledge.¹ It made a man duty bound to serve his own self, his relatives, his country and the world.² Patriotism, however, was the loftiest ideal that a believer in *Anushilan* would strive to realise.³ It was incumbent upon him to effect a synthesis between the scientific thought of the West and the passionless devotion to duty as prescribed by Shri Krishna in the *Bhagavat Gita*.⁴

The stress on the need for self-control and development of physical prowess in Bankim Chandra's theory of *Anushilan* was completely in tune with the moral and ideological formulations that characterised the *Anushilan Samiti*. The *Samiti*, it seemed, also subscribed to his cosmic philosophy in its commitment to bring about a healthy, prosperous, intelligent and kind race of men and women. Its ultimate aim was to develop a society which would realise freedom to the highest degree.⁵

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In the precise context of early twentieth century India, the *Anushilan Samiti* stood for militant nationalism with a definite Hindu orientation. The *Samiti* was a secret society that proposed to use violence for the overthrow of the British rule. It was an upshot of emotion that tended, although imperfectly, to fill a vacuum. The Indian National Congress of the time, which was about to have an ideological split, did not appeal to a section of the angry youth. The moderates, Barindra Kumar Ghosh observed, were holding annual sessions of the Congress only to ask the Government to introduce certain reforms that would serve the interest of the elite to which they belonged.⁶ The extremists failed even to define the term *Swaraj*, the catchword of their political mood. Most of them meant it to denote self-government within the British Empire.⁷ It was found difficult, as an important leader of the revolutionary nationalist movement stated, to reconcile between what the extremists said and what they believed.⁸ Necessarily an ideological and emotional void was left. The *Anushilan Samiti* was led to believe that neither the arguments of the moderates nor the threats of agitation of the extremists would do the miracle of destroying the British rule.

The ideological stance of the *Anushilan Samiti* was in clear contrast with that of the moderates and the extremists during the agitation against the partition of Bengal which took place in the later half of 1905. While both the wings of the Indian National Congress resorted to agitational means to undo the partition, one of the *Anushilan Samiti's* circulars pointed out:

This *Samiti* has no open relationship with any kind of popular and outward *Swadeshi*; that is (the boycott of) *belati* articles, of cloths, salt, sugar etc. To be mixed up in quarrels or disputes or implicated in the litigation about such affairs is entirely against the principles of the *Samiti*.

This *Samiti*, however, asked its members to use indigenous goods as much as possible but without making a fetish of it. It also held that it was impossible to drive out foreign goods without destroying the foreign rule.⁹ It implied that destruction of foreign rule was the supreme object that the *Anushilan Samiti* proposed to strive for. Such strivings, on this showing, were to be kept secret. It followed logically that the members of the *Samiti* should avoid all involvement in agitations and altercations that would not lead to freedom. The police reports, however, showed that some members of the *Samiti* including their leader Pulin Behari Das actively took part in the anti-partition agitation.¹⁰ These reports, if relied upon, did not prove that the *Samiti* plunged into the movement heart and soul. Its own records showed that it assumed a pronounced indifference to the agitation in question.¹¹ It is also significant that the *Anushilan Samiti* refused to conform to the accepted standard of political behaviour that characterised the middle-class Bengali Hindus in 1905. The movement for annulment of partition which led to a prodigious emotional rally of the Bengalis appeared futile to these

youthful rebels.

Another important component of the *Anushilan* ideology was its Hindu essence. A person who was not a Hindu was debarred from becoming a member of the *Samiti*.¹² An initiate into the *Samiti* had to undergo Hindu religious rituals at the time of his admission. Priya Nath Acharya, a witness in the Barisal (Supplementary) Conspiracy Case in 1914-15, stated in his evidence:

Before the *Durga Puja* vacation on the Mahalaya day, Ramesh, myself and several others of the *Dacca Samiti* were formally initiated at Ramna Siddheswati Kalibari by Pulin Das. There were 10 or 12 of us. We took *Adya*, *Antya* and the special vows before. There was no priest present and the ceremony took place at 8 A.M. before the goddess *Kali*. Pulin Das performed the *Jaina* before the goddess and other puja. The vows, which were printed, were read out by each of us and we signified our readiness to be bound thereby. The special vow was taken by each of us specially before the goddess with a sword and *Gita* on the head and kneeling on the left knee.¹³

The initiation, through an elaborate religious ritual as described above, was deemed expedient to add to the emotional intensity of an entrant into the innermost fold of the *Samiti*. This pure emotional purpose made a religious overtone indispensable. One point, however, was remarkable with regard to the Hindu orientation of the *Samiti*. It showed a deep admiration for Ancient India but it did not abide by the strict concept of the Hindu caste system. Pulin Behari Das, a *Kayastha*, was allowed to perform sacrifice and worship.

The exclusion of the Muslims from the *Samiti*, however, was a consciously thought out principle. Its members found the Muslims antagonistic to their aims. It made no exception in the case of those Muslims like Maulvi Liaquat Hussain who had absolute and unquestionable faith in a broad and non-communal nationalism. The grounds for exclusion of the latter group of Muslims, as the *Samiti* held, were prudential. The Muslim community in general, it was said, would not forgive those of their co-religionists who would line up with the *Anushilan Samiti*. The *Samiti* was also bitter about an attitude then prevalent among the nationalist leaders which pretended to treat the Muslims as equals of the Hindus. It was considered impolitic and dangerous. Despite all these, the members of the *Samiti* were forbidden 'to show hostile feelings against, or to deal unjustly with the Musalmans as a nation.'¹⁴

The circular of the *Anushilan Samiti* that outlined its attitude to the Muslim was characterised by a deep and unconcealed anti-Muslim bias. It was bitter against all attempts at establishing communal harmony. The attitude, however,

is understandable, though not commendable, in the context of time when the Anushilan Samiti was politicized. In March 1907 several places in the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam were rocked by outbursts of communal disturbances. This led, as it was alleged, the Anushilan Samiti to take up lathi-play and quasi-military discipline.¹⁵ The Samiti volunteers came into open clash with the Muslim rioters at Comilla and Dacca.¹⁶ At Comilla, the *Bande Mataram* wrote, the Government refrained from protecting the Hindus against 'an outburst of Mahamedan fury'.¹⁷ The Anushilan Samiti stepped in to protect the Hindus during this critical hour. This participation left a deep imprint on the ideological formulations of the Samiti. The 'terrorist conspiracies', to quote the *Bande Mataram*, had 'roots in the troubles at Comilla and Jamalpore'.¹⁸

The Anushilan Samiti had a strictly limited view of nationalism. Its reservations in regard to participation in agitations and inter-communal relations prevented it from building up a mass movement. The idea of keeping the Muslims out deprived the Samiti of the support of the majority of the peasants who could easily shelter the Samiti fugitives from law when needed. It was a movement of the educated Hindu youngmen which did not pretend to foment a mob fury to undo the British rule. Although it permitted its members to be associated with local popular movements, it enjoined on them not to outstrip the necessary limits.¹⁹ It decided to remain a secret society of youngmen of spotless moral character. It refused to sacrifice quality for quantity and popularity. It tried to keep its political objective as secret as possible.²⁰

Besides being limited in approach and content, the nationalism of the Anushilan Samiti was undefined and nebulous. While it agreed with the commonplace nationalist theones that India was being drained of resources owing to the foreign rule and a great civilisation was laid waste by the rulers, it did not prescribe any cure besides individual violence. Barindra Kumar Ghosh, a member turned critic, described its creed as immature, unsound and devoid of concrete and dependable foundation.²¹ Hem Chandra Quannongo, another pioneer and later a vehement opponent of revolutionary nationalism, saw in the entire movement an element of emotional instability.²²

These criticisms of the ideology of the Anushilan Samiti and similar associations were largely correct. But the Samiti was not an exception in this matter. It was a time of ideological immaturity for Indian nationalism as a whole. The Anushilan Samiti, however, came out peddling the concept of complete independence at a time of confused and shapeless ideological discord. It did represent a challenge, though unwise, remarkable in intensity of passion.

H. L. Salkeld, a Special Magistrate reporting in 1909, found in the Anushilan Samiti the beginning of a danger. He described it as a trained and

disciplined band of conspirators preparing themselves for guerilla warfare and for attracting the native army and hill tribes to eradicate foreign rule. He also pointed out that Abinash Chandra Chakravarty, the Munsiff of Narayangunj, had already drawn up a constitution of the Republic of India.²³

NOTES

1. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, *Dharmatattva: Anushilan*, pp. 1-11, 26-78.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 110-126.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 80.
5. Trailokya Nath Chakravarty, *Zale Ins Bachhar*, pp. 159-60.
6. Barindra Kumar Ghosh, *Agniyug*, p. 26.
7. Daniel Argov, *The Moderates and the Extremists in Indian Nationalist Movement*, pp. 125-26.
8. Upendra Nath Bandopadhyaya, *Nirbasiter Airmakatha*, p. 1.
9. Circular of the Anushilan Samiti found on search of Jyotirmoy Ray's house at Dacca in December 1907; H. L. Salkeld, *Report on the Anushilan Samiti*, Dacca (1909), I, pp. 14-20.
10. F. Brewster, *History of the Political Agitation and 'Bhadralog' Crime in the District of Dacca*, App. F. XIV, XVI.
11. Circular of the Anushilan Samiti.
12. Rules of Membership of the Anushilan Samiti, App. D, Bengal Govt. Letter No. 2800, 25 Mar. 1913, Home Poll. A. Progs. May 1913 Nos. 72-75.
13. *Report of the Sedition Committee*, V, para 88.
14. Circular of the Anushilan Samiti.
15. *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 4 May 1911.
16. Pulin Behari Das, *Viplavi Pulin Das*, pp. 124-34.
17. *Bande Mataram*.
18. *Ibid.*, 9 May 1908.
19. Circular of the Anushilan Samiti.
20. Chakravarty, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
21. Ghosh, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-4.
22. Hem Chandra Quannongo, *Bange Viplav Prachesta*, p. 250.
23. Salkeld, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

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BOOK REVIEWS

PREHISTORIC INDIAN ROCK PAINTINGS. By Erwin Neumayer,
Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983; Text 46 pp., Illustrated with 17
black and white photographs and 210 drawings in colour, Rs. 280.

Cave paintings of primitive man were first discovered in Europe in 1879 at Altamira in Spain and in the last decade of the nineteenth century in the Dordogne. The discovery of primitive rock paintings in India by Archibald Carlleyle of the Archaeological Survey of India was actually over a decade earlier than the sensational discovery of Altamira. But the dating of the paintings he discovered in the cave shelters of the Vindhya in 1867 became a problem that cannot be said to have been fully solved in the subsequent years though they continued to yield further discoveries including that of the vast galleries of Bhimbetka near Bhopal as recently as in 1957.

Neumayer attributes to the Eurocentrism of the epoch the tendency to deny antiquity to these finds and to ascribe late datings to them. It is undeniable that this bias was there and continues to prevail in many fields of humanistic research even today. But over-reaction to such prejudices can lead to a bias that is radically opposite in orientation but scarcely more acceptable. That was why, overwhelmed by far superior scholarship but confused by the lack of agreement among the scholars, I ventured to suggest in the first volume of my *History of Indian Painting* (Abhinav, 1976) that it would be better to be cautious about attributing great antiquity indiscriminately to all these finds and that isolated communities could reflect cultural mind-sets of the past in juxtaposition with communities which had evolved very much ahead. Neumayer also finally comes to the position that over-reacting to the extent of claiming all Indian rock paintings to be prehistoric does not help and that many of these paintings could have been done by isolated communities in relatively late historical periods. Thus, the broad categories he operates with are the Mesolithic and the Chalcolithic. There is not much precision or unanimity about the chronology of these epochs among researchers. But broadly, the Mesolithic or middle stone age would be from 7000 B.C. to 3500 B.C., after which the Neolithic or new stone age begins, the Chalcolithic being its early phase. The Mesolithic paintings reflect a hunting and food-gathering way of life; the Chalcolithic paintings portray the life-style of pastoralists and agriculturists.

If this chronology, with a wide play and not too deep a recession, may not satisfy some scholars, it will not bother the layman, and in general this book can be hailed as probably the best published so far from the point of view of the educated layman who has sensibility if not scholarship and would be grateful to

anyone who can tell him about the fascinating past while keeping in mind his limitations. Much of the material lies buried in scholarly journals which intimidate the layman. Books like those by Ajit Mookerjee (1959) and Wakankar and Brooks (1976) are illustrated well and the latter especially is a solid contribution to the literature on the subject. But the bad state of preservation of many of the paintings, and the overlay of work of many periods, tend to make photographs not too helpful for the layman, a point which Neumayer effectively brings out by including over a dozen photographs. His preferred method has been to make copies of the paintings, avoiding the elements of later periods that intrude into the original composition and above all using the freedom this method allows to assemble drawings on the same subject for comparative study of stylistic treatment. And this reveals a great variety.

Thus, it is as an aid for the aesthetic evaluation of the paintings of the prehistoric days that this book makes its most substantial contribution. But before we come to that, certain areas of ambiguity have to be noted. There are many speculations on the part of the author; if certainly suggestive, they are not always fully convincing. Thus, speculating on the possible reason for the extremely rare depiction of single hunters, Neumayer argues that the "emotional upheaval of inflicting wounds and death" created the feeling that hunting was a "trespass" and therefore it was depicted as "communally shared" in the scenes of group hunting. The problem of the origin of intrapsychic conflicts in early man is still unresolved. Freud's explanation—the younger generation killing the patriarch because he monopolised all the females of the group and getting guilt feelings as a consequence—has been rejected even by the canonical tradition of psychoanalytic thought. But at least it sought the origin of such feelings in intraspecies conflict. The chances of guilt feelings arising in inter-species conflict, especially when it is basic to survival in the early milieu and when it is seen to be the pattern governing also the relations between species of animals (herbivores and carnivores) and not only the relations between man and the species he hunted, seem extremely remote.

Neumayer seems to be in two minds about the view that primitive art originated as magic, in the belief that the representation of an animal, whether it represented sustenance or menace to man, ensured victory over it in the subsequent hunting encounter. He claims that the untouched jungle is the most peaceful environment he knows and that the modern city holds greater menace. One has to remonstrate that prehistoric man was not in a position to make such a comparative evaluation. Further, in another context, while commenting on the absence of paintings on food-gathering and the abundance of hunting scenes, Neumayer himself says that the more arduous and risky tasks required more magic—the ritual act of pictorial representation—while everyday tasks hardly needed any. The origin of art as magic ritual is now too well-substantiated to be

cavalierly dismissed. A more profitable line would be to note the subsequent emancipation of the aesthetic as an autonomous impulse from the magical-utilitarian. I tried to illustrate this in the first volume of the *History of Indian Painting* by pointing out the emergence of the concern with rhythm, symmetry and asymmetry, stylisation and compositional variety. But that was in connection with Indus valley pottery decoration and with very limited visual material. Neumayer's fine and abundant drawings are virtually a celebration of this autonomy of art.

The beginnings of this autonomy are seen best in the category usually referred to as X-ray paintings because they depict the internal organs of the game animals. It is true that the digestive canal is represented fairly accurately in some of the drawings. But very soon, as Neumayer points out, it becomes difficult to distinguish such depiction from decorative markings and as the pictorial sensibility matures, no ambiguity lingers about the purely aesthetic and decorative intention behind these markings. They show an astonishing variety in the design unit—square, lozenge, rectangle, hexagon, arrow and wave patterns—and can become fully floral and extend even to inanimate objects which have no internal organs. Occasionally two colours and very rarely three colours are used to bring out the patterns more vividly.

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Objective reality, the given raw actuality, is suavely transformed by decorative arrangement in the depiction of a bundle of arrows in a fine half-circle of radiating lines, of the loin cloth as a four-petalled floral shape around the waist. It is more radically, expressionistically, transformed in the exaggeration of anatomical elements, for instance, in the lengthening of the arm in the direction of its prehensile reach and its desire. The rather indeterminate virtual space of the picture is occasionally given precision and order through a clear base line. Rhythm elegantly transforms the anatomical contour and in the depiction of dances it is serially and musically repeated, being terminated with a visual justness in the last figure whose stance closes the flow by a mirror (left-right) reversal of the unit pattern.

The very helpful comparative juxtapositions of figures—animal as well as human—disclose an incredible stylistic variety, the streamlined simplification being most radical and most effective in Chalcolithic pottery designs, which were derived from rock painting and were again imitated in large scale painting. A startling revelation is the variety of perspectives—eye-level, subtending various angles, bird's eye-view, foreshortened—in the depiction of carts or chariots in the Chalcolithic period. And when one remembers that the most radical stylisations of the human figure in modern art have been anticipated in ancient Cycladic sculpture and also recalls the metal rod sculptures of Nataraja by a contemporary artist like Dhan Raj Bhagat, one can accept Wakankar's reference to

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some of the dancing figures in Bhimbetka as Natarajas and the tacit endorsement of this by Neumayer who has reproduced them.

Krishna Chaitanya

THE RĀMĀYAṆA IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE. By H.D. Sankalia, Delhi: Macmillan India Ltd., 1982; 205 pp., Rs. 80.

The Rāmāyaṇa is recognised as the primeval epic (*ādikāvyā*), notwithstanding its many-faceted appeal as *purāṇa*, *itihāsa*, book of worship, and so on. Rooted in history (for a part of the story, viz. Rama's banishment and his refusal to return) and with place names that link the characters with cities and territories that are real, the epic is a unique blend of fact, fiction and fancy, told in a manner in which realism and imagination are inseparable. For instance, Hanuman's mission to Lanka in search of Sita may be a 'fact' necessary for the tale, but his journey through sea and air is fiction; and how he achieved it, including his encounters *en route*, is fancy. All this, however, is mingled—amalgamated, one should say—so as to evoke interest at the basic level and wonder, at the deeper non-cognitive level of the listener (or reader, in modern times).

Ever since Western scholarship turned its eye on the heritage of India, it has become the practice to apply the critical apparatus (as seen by the West) to the Rāmāyaṇa (and other works as well) to offer insights relating to the date of the epic, its historical date, its reflection of social life, customs and manners, techniques of warfare etc. Latest in this line is H. D. Sankalia's study of the Rāmāyaṇa in historical perspective. Indology, archaeology and research in its widest sense are fields in which the veteran scholar has applied himself for many years now, with a zeal and daring that could put younger minds to shame.

This book, says the blurb on the dust cover, "deals exhaustively and critically with the Rāmāyaṇa." In contrast to the treatment hitherto accorded, "the author subjects the epic to hypercriticism and treats it as a historical document." In Sankalia's own words, "Can we, by a very critical, historical and archaeological analysis stratify the contents, incidents and accounts of persons and places, and say something about the antiquity of the story as a whole?" (p.21.) In this task, the author is not quite at ease, as one notices in more than one passage. The defensive argument runs as follows. "Though one realised that the Rāmāyaṇa is a poetical composition, still this poem must have had a locale, and the time or times during which it was composed may be discerned, as has been



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attempted. That is our plea for undertaking this research." (p. 97) (The author evidently means 'excuse' when he uses the word 'plea').

As the book unfolds itself, the researcher compels the reader to perceive him in the image of Viśvāmitra who sought to challenge and humble Vasiṣṭha—a tale admirably told in the Bālakāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa. For, Sankalia's tools of research fall as bluntly at the altar of Valmiki as the arrows of Viśvāmitra aimed at Vasiṣṭha. If one may pursue the metaphor, Vālmiki's *brahma daṇḍa* is the magic that pervades his inspired outburst of poetry—invisible, yet incomprehensibly unassailable.

The problem, in a sense, is of his own making. Few scholars know better than Sankalia that

- (i) The 'story' of the Rāmāyaṇa has no historical evidence
- (ii) Vālmiki has 'woven out a story from floating, uncrystallized material'
- (iii) The Rāmāyaṇa has been subject to interpolations, right down to the 19th cent A.D. (even the critical edition of the Oriental Research Institute does not satisfy the author)
- (iv) Generations of Indians have subscribed to and reinforced the divine element in the Rāmāyaṇa.

And, may it be said in fairness to the father of Indian literature that Vālmiki was a poet, not a reporter?

It is therefore hard to extend sympathy when the author wails: "both the illiterate and the well-educated always think that Rama and Krishna lived thousands of years ago and very often demand visible proof of their existence from archaeologists". Instead of dismissing the "demand" with a scholarly frown, Sankalia proceeds, "One of the aims of this study is to collect these 'visible proofs' and discuss their bearing on the date of Rama and the Rāmāyaṇa" (p. 4).

The search for visible proofs leads to a list of 15 items (p. 97) pertaining to the Yuddhakāṇḍa and the Sundarakāṇḍa; the signet ring of Rama (sent through Hanuman to Sita) suggests the idea that the poet might have used the model from Taxila (circa Xian era). In the description of drinking scenes in Lanka, Sankalia perceives the influence of Graeco-Roman contact, the city of Lanka, as described, is modelled on Nagarjunakonda which flourished in the 2nd or 3rd cent. A.D., and so on.

All this painstaking research, however, is set at naught by the absence of a continued awareness of interpolations. How could "the poet" have a model,

when interpolations add "geographical and supernatural" details? The author's confusion is unmistakable in statements such as "once the interpolations started, the poet gave a free rein to his imagination and the present Sundarakāṇḍa emerged" (p. 99).

Who, then, was the poet? This is the conundrum of an Indian epic, emanating in the oral tradition and culminating in the critical edition that emerges out of a study of 86 palm leaf manuscripts from all over India none of which date back to earlier than A.D. 1020. Oddly, a scholar of Sankalia's eminence makes the amazing statement: "Granted the Rāmāyaṇa is primarily a poem, still a poet anywhere—in India or elsewhere—must belong to a certain time and environment. Even Dante's *Divine Comedy* represents the religious and philosophical views of an Italian author who lived in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries." (p. 3). The validity of the comparison would rest on who "the poet" was, who authored the Rāmāyaṇa, and what we know of him and his "time and environment". That there is such a thing as imagination in a poet seems to elude a research scholar when he sets out to collect "visible facts" in a poem not less than two thousand years old, in essence. Archaeology can't have all the answers, not when the project involves digging into a poet's psyche. Amusing indeed is the author's observation, "Thus, the Pushpaka could have been the first jumbo jet. However, it could have been a helicopter as well". (p. 105).

As one closes the book one is tempted to remind the author, in the words of Shakespeare, "to gild refined gold, to throw a perfume on the violet, or to add another hue unto the rainbow is wasteful and ridiculous excess".

K. S. Srinivasan

PANORAMA OF JAIN ART—SOUTH INDIA. By C. Sivaramamurthy, New Delhi: The Times of India Press, 1983; 372 pp. + 564 pls, Rs. 650.

This book is in some respects a parallel and companion volume to the three volume series, *Jaina Art and Architecture*, published in 1974, to celebrate the 2500th year of the Nirvāṇa of Mahāvīra. Published under the auspices of Bharatiya Jnanpith, it was edited by the late Mr. A. Ghosh, former Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, in which the present reviewer had the privilege of contributing several sections. The book under review is a cor-

responding tribute and is dedicated to the celebration of the Mahamastak-abhisheka of Gommatēśvara Bahubali at Sravanabelgola in Karnataka, which was held in February, 1981. This event coincided with the 1000th year of the consecration of that spectacular monolith of 57 feet height by Chāmundaṛāya, the General of the Ganga king Mārasīṃha in A.D. 982. This single volume visual conspectus of Jaina art achievements by the late lamented Mr. C. Sivaramamurthy is verily the swansong of that learned writer and art historian.

Jaina art is indeed, only in the manner of saying, for, Jainism has virtually seeped into the entire matrix of Indian art and culture and is inextricably mixed up with it in shades, hues and tints. In point of fact, it is nothing but the art under the noble inspiration of Jainism evolved under the patronage of kings and pontiffs by a distinguished line of craftsmen. Art in Jainism gave priority to the supremacy of the soul and its immaculate character. Perfection was the watch word and living faith of its metaphysics no less than its Tirthankaras. No wonder the entire phenomenal world became its province. It is the immortal glory of Jainism that no part or feature of this world was outside its ambit. It could thus define the role and unravel the intricacies with the aesthetic universalism of approach that was matched only by the prodigious mastery of craft that flowered under the inspiration of the noble credo of Mahāvīra. Thus temple building, stone carving, mural paintings, bronze images and ritual ancillaries became the content of the Jaina cultural panorama, filling our hills and dales, villages and towns with a whole complex of art creations which has ever been the envy and wonder of the entire Indian art world and craft fraternity. Unlike Buddhism which, for long from its beginning in art in the 3rd Century B.C. until the efflorescence in the 8th Century A.D. of its Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna potentialities, struck its own individualistic idiom, design and perspectives, Jainism showed a pleasant commonalty of approach in visual aesthetics with the Brahmanical Hindu art and architecture and was its provocative foil. Rama and Krishna jostling as much with Jaina forbears as with yakshas, yakshis, śāsanadevis and nidhis realised a perfect integration of the national spiritual ethos through art, which appealed to the lowliest as well as the elite what with the presentation of the masterminds of the macrocosm in the form of the Tirthankaras.

Above all, the stark, drastic and draconic physical frame of the Digambara Tirthankara image is a masterly statement of reality and the fundamentalism in faith. The *Kevalin* corresponds no doubt to the *Samyaksambuddhi* of Gautama, the Buddha, but the *Śrutakēvalin*, well-versed in *Dvādaśāṅga*, ever tried to achieve the perfection that was the heirloom of Mahāvīra and the 23 Tirthankaras that preceded him starting with Rṣhabhadeva or Ādinātha. This emphasis on the omniscient knowledge of the reality of human existence and the tremendous potential of the individual to play his unerring part is an outstanding

trait of Jaina metaphysics and an enduring glory of its translation into art plane.

The aim of the publication is to survey and assess the art manifestations under Jaina motivations in South India. Sivaramamurthy advisedly abstains from any firm regional categorization of the inflexions of that art, and is content to pick up the innumerable felicitous creations of the Jaina craftsmen from about the pre-Christian centuries to the end of the Naik period. He considers the latter period as marking the decline of the creative art in India. In that process, he is perhaps constrained to meander through this stream of Jaina art, now and again wafting down its affluents and tributaries. This explains why the narration seemingly does not have any firm directional thrust, but tends to become a weave through the many-splendoured tapestry.

In the narrative part, this approach is still capable of holding the attention of the reader to the expansive nature of the aesthetics and metaphysical symbolism, though it has the tendency to digressive traverses across the terrain of that art. But in the visual picturisation of the narrative in the illustrations, this tendency creates the anomaly of the reader having to go forwards and backwards in time and space, and mingle classic idioms with conventionalised and discrete delineations. His division of the Jaina art summation into architecture, sculpture and painting in three sections accentuates this problem even more, and despite the ravishingly beautiful plates on the landmarks, professionally perfect, it leaves the reader in a maze of anachronistic juxtapositions of art movements. And given the remarkable multiplicity of the zonal, regional and subsidiary efforts of the artisans who were responsible for the fulfilment of the Jaina art movement, it makes the pictorial sequence a congeries of parts, switching on repeatedly from early to late manifestations. Perhaps, this could not have been obviated as long as the pictorial narrative followed literally, as it did, the references in the scriptural narrative. However, if the micro-illustrations shown on the margins alone had punctuated the scriptural narrative, and the sumptuous portfolios in a truly chronocultural order for whole regions in South India had been furnished in the larger pictures, the self-same fare could perhaps have been more harmonious and satisfying than it has actually turned out to be. Perhaps with the failing health of the author, close attention to the layout became progressively unavailing. Editing being an arduous task in art publications, one may as well overlook this and be truly grateful for the prodigiously colourful and varied fare the volume offers, upholding its aim in presenting the panorama. For the same reason, one also misses a keynote disquisition on the matrix of art under Jainism, which no one was more competent to present than the learned author himself. In sum, the natural character of the Jaina art has been surpassingly and spectacularly portrayed in the script and the visuals, but the distinguishing characteristics of the South Indian contribution to the Jaina mainstream lurking somewhere are not effectively disclosed.

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It is indeed a challenging job to present the total achievements of Jaina art in South India as indeed in its parental northern plains within the compass of a single volume. All the same, one small but striking cameo of that art, which virtually initiated the creative spectrum, has been overlooked. We are referring to the small grey terracotta bust, archaeologically relatable to the 4th century B.C. discovered in the excavations at Ayodhya—the birth place indeed of more than one Tirthankara—which reveals the earliest manifestation of Jaina art in the form of a possible Kevalin with shaven head, distended ears, dangling hands and a beatific smile. The work belongs to the masses, and thus is an epitome of the hold of Mahāvīra's religion in art form among the poor and the lowly.

The volume is well produced. It not only measures up to the high quality of the Times of India publications, but sets a new standard in art production in the country. The photographers have spared no pains to produce exquisite purple patches. The art lovers and historians who were pining for seeing the Jaina art gallery in colour and print are treated to a sumptuous banquet. The volume is a fragrant bouquet of the choicest blossoms of Jaina art in South India to the author and a worshipful homage to the memory of Bahubali, the saint. The book is, by all standards, a treasure-house of creative Jaina art of three millennia and a testimony to its immortality.

K. V. Soundara Rajan

THE FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA, 1860-1977. By Raymond W. Goldsmith. Delhi: Oxford University press, 1983; xv + 240 pp., Rs. 125.

When Mathew Arnold called history a huge Mississippi of falsehood, little did he realize that history could be well-documented by not merely circumstantial and 'behavioural' evidence, but also by many quantitative methods and usefully studied for policy orientations. The use of quantitative methods—the 'cliometrics' deploying econometric methods to study different relationships—is fairly recent in literature, and is being used by a few Indian economic historians as well. Goldsmith is not an economic historian in a puritanic sense, but is a 'monetary' economist-turned-historian, with the necessary equipment in quantitative methods. He relies—unlike pure historians delving into materials in the archives—on published literature, which he has collected in abundance and in a systematic manner, but does not hesitate to make 'even rough estimates', where the existing data do not shed much light on the subject of inquiry, if only to sug-

gest that figures, once accepted, would often speak for themselves

Goldsmith divides the span of 117 years into three periods covering three chapters: the Victorian India, 1860-1913, India between the Wars, 1914-1946, and Independent India, 1947-1977. All the three chapters are balanced in terms of volume (65 pages of Chapter I, 72 pages of Chapter II and 88 pages of Chapter III) and systematic in the treatment of the subjects dealt with, viz., infrastructure, money, prices, interest rates, balance of payments, capital formation and saving, financial institutions, financing the different sectors of the economy, and the national balance sheet.

Goldsmith views the role of the British Government in the Victorian India as positive and helpful to the later day development process, and quotes Karl Marx in his favour. He mentions that law and order and development of the railroad system, and modern currency and banking system are the factors conducive to development which are provided by the British. But he carefully avoids describing railways as the 'leading' sector. (In this sense, he has fought shy of becoming an Indian Fogel or an Indian Rostow).

The Victorian India was one of stagnation or 'very slow growth' in real income, the estimate being less than 1 per cent per annum, going by Goldsmith's rudimentary method of combining estimates of two scholars. The position improved slightly in the period 1914-46 when national produce seemed to have gone up by a little over 1 per cent per annum. In Independent India, the growth rate had improved further and considerably, being 3.6 per cent per annum upto 1971. In terms of per capita income, however, the improvement from the estimated 0.4 per cent per annum during the Victorian period to about 1.4 per cent in Independent India upto 1971 is in no way substantial considering the fact that the period that was considered has covered a fairly long span of years.

Goldsmith hints subtly that commercialization of agriculture had begun in the Victorian era itself, with cash crops catching up faster than the food crops. This explains in part the higher pick-up in the annual expansion rate in money supply than in real output in the Victorian period and the inter-war years. Money supply (expressed in the narrow sense of money for transactions purposes) was estimated to have expanded by 2.5 per cent and 3 per cent per annum in the Victorian as well as the inter-war periods. Money supply grew at about 8.5 per cent in Independent India upto 1977, thus maintaining a substantial gap between itself and the real growth rate. The gap is reflected in the rise in prices, vindicating thus the quantity theory of money. Goldsmith himself seems to believe in this theory (p. 9), as his explanation of income-money and prices in the Victorian period shows. The average annual increases in prices were estimated at 1.5 per cent in Victorian India, 3 per cent in the inter-war years and 5 per cent in

Independent India. Goldsmith does not, however, link the developments in money and prices with those in balance of payments. The balance of payments situation was characterised by export surpluses till the end of 1920s, and inflows of foreign investments, in considerable quantities upto 1913, and later in moderate amounts. The large exports of gold—mainly owing to the depression of the 'thirties—facilitated by sale of gold by people often in distress, led to the accumulation of sterling balances in London, helping India in the infancy of her Independence to finance her capital imports to some extent. The balance of payments problem was serious in Independent India upto mid-seventies, leading according to Goldsmith, to the limiting of imports.

Even though the annual average real growth rate was low in both the Victorian and the inter-war years, Goldsmith's discussion on capital formation seems to suggest the presence of a growth momentum. From a conjectural 5.5 per cent in Victorian India, gross capital formation to national product went up to 7 per cent in the inter-war years, and to 20 per cent in the 'seventies. Here Goldsmith does not unfortunately make efforts to evaluate the worth of these estimates, but if one were to go by the Raj Committee's Report (Capital Formation and Saving in India, 1950-51 to 1979-80, Reserve Bank of India, 1982) one would think that it must have entailed a superhuman effort to make guesses on capital formation that had taken place before Independence.

Goldsmith traces in elaborate detail the development of various financial institutions—commercial and co-operative banking system, post-office savings, insurance, indigenous banking, to mention a few. Put together, they grew at an annual average rate of about 5 per cent and 9 per cent respectively between 1870 and 1913 and in the inter-war years (in terms of total resources). The rapid increase of the commercial and co-operative banking system replacing the indigenous bankers and the development of insurance reflect, according to Goldsmith, the structural change in the direction of modernization of the country's financial structure. But Goldsmith does not dwell on the factors that have helped to develop and modernize banking and insurance. Is the development in banking on account of the rise in money incomes? Or is it due to a combination of factors, such as the rise in incomes, the difficulty faced by small savers in holding gold, silver and other immovable properties in view of their rising prices, and the wide range of services provided by the modern banking? Apart from these questions which are illustrative, the need to know the different qualities of the assets of the financial institutions—the yield rates, the maturity patterns, and the capital gains they provide—is important. For, the degree of substitutions and the degree of liquidity apart from the income-generating effect of the assets make interesting and useful reading for an economic analyst. The mere fact that financial assets had proliferated and increased in volume is only to be expected in any development process. And it is here that Goldsmith avoids making

analytical judgments and lets the figures and information speak for themselves.

Goldsmith's treatment of the financing of the non-financial sectors in the Victorian India and in the inter-war years is also replete with data and information. The general impressions that serious students of economic history of India have about the financing of railways, agriculture and Government, to cite a few, get further endorsed by Goldsmith's study.

Goldsmith's work should be viewed as a labour of love and devotion, and studied and meaningfully interpreted by readers depending on their tastes. One may not accept all his 'estimates', on the ground that they are blown up by use of statistical methods which may not necessarily reflect the realities, but no other estimate, however well made, would deviate from the direction of the estimates provided by the author.

A. Vasudevan

THE KHILAFAT MOVEMENT—RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM AND POLITICAL MOBILIZATION IN INDIA. By Gail Minault. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1982; 1 + 294 pp., Rs. 75.

When reading a review of a book of this kind, dealing with a not too-remote episode in our national life, it may be of interest to readers to have some information of the reviewer's own relationship to it, before they do so.

Your reviewer had witnessed the emergence of the Khilafat movement (1919-20), and its merging, if not complete identification, with Gandhiji's Non-cooperation and mass national mobilization campaign (1920-21), with the adolescent sensibilities and understanding of a schoolboy. He had been brought up in a family with a strong liberal and nationalistic outlook and an almost proprietary feeling for the Indian National Congress—with which it had been actively associated from its birth. The family had been a pioneer among those that had embarked in a planned and systematic way to utilise western techniques in the fields of education and material aspects of life to cope with the exigencies of the current western dominated age. This had not only strengthened its inherent urge for regaining national freedom, but imbued it with self confidence in its capacity to contribute positively towards the attainment of that end.

Thus, the Khilafat movement as a means for mobilizing the widely scat-

tered, disparate, and in several ways mutually antagonistic, mass of Indian Muslim political opinion, on an issue that helped to unite them among themselves, as well as with the major and other minority communities, in forging a national anti-British imperialist front in India, enthused him. True, the Khalif in Turkey was for him a distant phantom figure. What he had heard about his doings also did not inspire him with much enthusiasm for him as a person. Yet, his symbolic significance as a relic, that had been preserved, through thick and thin, in more or less authentic form, from the time of the Prophet, did still stir in him atavistic memories that made him kin with the emotions of the bulk of his community. It is against this background of distant memory that he has now read this detailed, and extremely competent study of the Khilafat movement.

Straightway, he must declare that it is distinguished by a high degree of scholarship. What stands out most are the direct references it throughout makes to original records and correspondence, a great deal of which are naturally in Urdu. The use that is made of Urdu political verse of the period to highlight and illumine the facts and the characters of the chief actors in the drama of the movement—the Khilafat movement was above all dramatic—is skilful; it shows how well the author has understood the catalytic role that Urdu poetry played in galvanising the emotions of the Indian masses—irrespective of their caste, creed, economic and social differences and divisions. The parallel between what was being done by Irish poets in Ireland and in India by Urdu poets at about the same time to arouse nationalistic sentiments in a form that would, if not hoodwink the British authorities charged with the task of suppressing such sentiments, at least make it difficult for them to convict the writers in a court of law, is striking. Perhaps it presages the link between W. B. Yeats and Tagore.

The style in which the book is written is extremely readable, concise, and not lacking in a dry sense of humour. Referring to a fund-raising campaign of the Ali brothers, she remarks that it "often resembled the line of an itinerant huckster at a country fair." Giving excerpts from Muhammad Ali's speech during it in Madras (April 2nd, 1921) in which every kind of inducement was held out, she adds: "The only thing lacking was a guarantee to refund their money if they were not fully satisfied."

The characters and importance of the principal actors, Mahatma Gandhi, Maulanas Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, Abdul Bari and Abul Kalam Azad, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai, the two Nehrus and Saifuddin Kitchlew and others, involved either directly with the Khilafat movement or with its always rather tense and delicately balanced relationship with its counterparts in the other communities of India, are allowed to emerge in the swift flowing narrative only on the basis of the part they actually played in it—their actions not professions—without embellishment or elaboration.

Except in regard to Maulanas Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Abdul Bari and Abul Kalam Azad, one is told very little about their personalities and background. A little more about this would have enhanced the value of the book considerably. It would have been especially valuable as the leaders of the other (non-Muslim) communities and groups had all clustered round Gandhiji, who radiated the aura of the Indian National Congress and his own saintliness over them all. In consequence, there has been a tendency among subsequent historians to adjudge them as having been more 'nationalist' and less 'communitary conscious' than those who led the Khilafat movement. A slightly more expansive treatment of this aspect would have enabled one to get closer to the heart of the conundrum that confronted the leaders of different Indian communities at the time—that of safeguarding or advancing the interest of their own communities and yet keeping it within the ambit of the national anti-imperialist struggle—and to judge them on the basis of their actual response to it on each count.

Nevertheless, in your reviewer's opinion, the author convinces one of the validity of her thesis, that the Khilafat movement used "pan-Islamic symbols to forge a pan-Indian Muslim constituency... (It) can be viewed as a phenomenon of particular relevance to India, one that sought to reconcile Islamic identity with Indian nationality". Through its employment of pan-Islamic symbolism it mobilized Muslims of every category social, economic and intellectual, from all parts of India for participating in the national freedom movement. In fact, the author succeeds in showing that the Muslim contribution in the non-cooperation and civil disobedience movement was comparatively greater than that of any other Indian community. Mahatma Gandhi on several occasions was almost compelled to move forward under the pressure of his Muslim supporters. It was not the lack of Muslim support for the national movement that brought it to a halt (after the Chauri Chaura incident); it was the danger of its taking a violent turn under their pressure and elan, which the Mahatma could not control or countenance.

As the author observes: "Gandhi espoused the Khilafat because he saw it primarily as an anti-British issue, a means to bring the Muslims into a nationalist movement and a big boost to his plans to reorganise and redirect the Congress into a mass movement." Gandhiji knew the psychology and ethos of the Indian people better than most of the other Western educated and oriented political leaders. In a speech to Calcutta students in 1915 he had categorically declared: "Politics cannot be divorced from religion". This had particularly impressed the Ali brothers, and was to be the basis on which Hindu-Muslim unity was to be forged subsequently.

"The Khilafat", as the author says, "was a symbol which meant different things to different people, but the anti-British nature of the symbol provided

some consistency, and on this basis the Hindu-Muslim alliance was built". At the height of the freedom campaign, the author points out: "In predominantly Muslim areas, Ulemas and Sufis were the chief messengers of the movement, armed with *fatawa* and religious rhetoric. For Hindu audiences, religious symbolism was also employed: the promised *Swaraj* became *Ramraj* or *Gandhiraj*, the rule of virtue, versus the present *Ravanraj*, the rule of evil."

This review may fittingly conclude with a quotation from the last paragraph of the book: "The national alliance disintegrated, but Muslim self-consciousness, with or without the Khilafat to symbolise it, had become a factor in Indian politics. All future attempts to cement an Indian national alliance had to take that feeling of Muslim consciousness into account, and did so inadequately".

It is hard to dispute this uncomfortable conclusion. One can only urge now, that the lessons of the past should be pondered over when making attempts to forge such an alliance in the present. For that purpose, a careful study of this book by all those who are concerned with Hindu-Muslim unity and national integration problems would be a salutary preparation.

Badr-ud-Din Tyabji

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU, A BIOGRAPHY, Vol. II, 1947-56, By Sarvepalli Gopal, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1979; 346 pp., Rs. 150.

This is the second volume of a carefully researched and widely applauded biography of Jawaharlal Nehru by a scholar who has had the advantage of a certain personal proximity to his subject and to some others who had, as he notes in the preface, a share in "the history of the first years of free India". Even to his detractors, Jawaharlal is a fascinating figure, lending himself, often out of his own mouth, to the venting of his flaws and his failure to fulfil the role in history, to which the trust and affection of his people and the shaping of his life largely by the Gandhi 'magic' (that he never forswore) had summoned him throughout his restless involvement with his people for a forty-five-year stretch. Much was, and continues to be expected of Sarvepalli Gopal, with his gifts and advantages, in this regard—a biography of Jawaharlal, without gust that might come easy but is insipid, also without the superior rancour which, in our peculiar conditions, tends sometimes to creep into estimations of a career that reflected, perhaps inevitably, the long historical shadows of our Indian predicament.

Considering that the canvas is vast and there is a surfeit of source material (to which Gopal has had a much more than usually generous access), the biographer's task is difficult, the problems of discrimination are baffling, the pitfalls in the way of generalisations (that, to the extent possible, must be made) are often acute. Gopal's fortunate apprenticeship has endowed him with a certain mastery of the tools of historical inquiry and he has a feeling for the language in which he clothes his findings and his reflections. Here, indeed, is a book not only well researched but also well written. So well written, indeed, that even when one comes up against defaults and deficiencies and resents them more because of the author's obvious competence and the book's general excellence, one cannot call it good only in parts like the curate's egg, but stops short of such censure. These Gopal volumes will, for the foreseeable future, be deemed the most useful, because the most carefully documented, biography of Jawaharlal Nehru.

Perhaps it is a pity that with his gift of the pen, Gopal prefers a certain stern restraint and there is hardly a picture, though promised in the preface, of India during 1947-56, the last year being "the summer solstice of (Nehru's) prime ministership" (Gopal's concluding words)—that "prime ministership", in Nehru's case, being a lot more than leading the government of the country but an aspect of what Nehru, with an endearing excess of emotion perhaps, had called "India's tryst with destiny". This is an aspect of what Gopal himself has stressed as Nehru's conception of democracy as government of the people not only by and for the people, but also "with" the people—this probably an impossibilist but nevertheless, in a newly free country, an inspiring desire. It is impermissible, of course, for an historian of Gopal's rectitude, to embark on a sentimental exercise, but one wishes that though the glow in our people's hearts that Jawaharlal used in 1945-46 to talk about beautifully remained largely unlit with independence. August 15, 1947 was not only a "sad morning" (title of Gopal's first chapter) but a lot more besides—something that at least an Indian historian, however austere, should not overlook altogether.

It must be conceded that with the overflowing abundance of material (which with all his assiduity, Gopal appears to have been able to use very selectively), the biographer had a dizzying task and too much must not be expected of him. One should, in any case, be thankful for Gopal's marshalling of the material—if it isn't 'God's plenty' that he offers, the fare is plenteous, some of it unfamiliar but usually also appetising. One enjoys the quiet eloquence of Gopal's style when, for example, with minimum comment, he relates how Rajendra Prasad had objected, on astrological advice, to 26 January 1950 as the date for the inauguration of the Republic and Nehru put his foot down, with "a withering reply" (pp. 77-78). One savours the irritation of Jawaharlal, in spite of his soft corner for Jayaprakash Narayan and his astonishing patience with the latter's political pranks, when the suggestion of military support to Nepal Congress in 1950

emanating as it did from "amateur politicians who know nothing about politics and less about insurrection", made him claim "a right to be upset" (p. 69). Looking around him in 1948, Nehru bewailed "the sordidness of opportunist politics" (p. 74), burst out, in re the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party, that "an organisation without an ideology should not be called a political party ordinarily, but more aptly called a drinking den" (p. 153). When Jayaprakash Narayan, of all people, had hurt him like hell, denouncing in 1951 his "naked, open fascism", Nehru's response was to ensure that two Socialist leaders, Narendra Deva and Kamala Devi, were not opposed in the election. He went on to say that choosing candidates, "snarling for selection" and often "third-rate", was "more of a burden and a heart-break than almost anything that I have done", adding: "I have felt recently as if I was in a den of wild animals" (pp. 159-61). The grouse that Gopal's biography provokes, however, as one goes through his opulent pages is that in perhaps trying to be severe, so that an earlier predilection could be overcome, he fails to grasp the essential facets of a life that, with perhaps fundamental failures, was yet luminous with unremitting Service to his country and also, to the extent of his powers, to all humanity.

It is difficult to expound in the limited space of a review the reader's impression that the author, by no means antipathetic to his subject, somehow cannot get rid of a peevish air about him and so he is sometimes gratuitously unfair, even graceless, not only to Jawaharlal but to almost all his contemporaries,—Abu Kalam Azad is hardly mentioned, Pant, B. C. Roy and such others noted almost as inconsequential people (which they were not), Mahalanobis relegated to a lonely footnote (perhaps because, planning, for long a Jawaharlal passion and during 1955-56 passing through a phase of qualitative analysis, appears, not enduringly without reason, to Gopal to have been a rather phoney exercise), Rajendra Prasad dismissed as being "in the ranks of medievalism" (wasn't he a little more than that?), Vijayalakshmi Pandit, closely in Jawaharlal's confidence (their correspondence is profusely drawn upon), though never once consulted for her views—a privilege proffered, however, by Gopal to Mountbatten and to C. D. Deshmukh—figuring only among 'references', Rajagopalachari is treated with a laboured and lofty disdain which is unworthy, and which Jawaharlal, who did not hesitate even to place on record his appreciation (1956) of the "rectitude, ability, efficiency and fairness" of a lesser man, Morarji Desai (p. 206), would have resented. It is better the list is not lengthened, which it could be, for it is unsavoury. From the author a different yard-stick was expected; a V. K. Krishna Menon, for example, a 'character', though hardly always a likeable one, and in his own sometimes involuted way a truly talented man whose foreign policy assistance to Nehru was substantial, deserved from the author more perceptive treatment.

It will be wrong to generalise from the author's hints (which are important

about Radhakrishnan's suggestion regarding close relations, even a friendship treaty, with the U.S.S.R. as early as February-March 1950 (p. 64), that Nehru had an allergy towards socialism and socialist countries, from which his then Ambassador was immune. Persistently, in the foreign policy chapters, Gopal minimises Nehru's role in fashioning the fabric of Indo-Soviet friendship; not chary of Nehru quotations, he is content with citing one, indirectly, from 'New York Times' (29 June 1955). "He (Nehru) said as he took off from Moscow: 'I am leaving part of my heart behind.' We might be forgiven for thinking that he also left a part of his common sense behind" (p. 248). Over Korea, when despite wobblings India played a not unworthy role, Gopal ignores the Nehru-Stalin exchanges—perhaps Stalin remains too much of a *bête noire*, for Gopal never even mentions Nehru's memorable speech in Parliament on the death of Stalin. This brings to mind that while Parliament was the forum where Nehru most often thought aloud, the citations, abounding in the biography are seldom from the records, meticulously kept, of that 'talking shop'. For some strange reason, Gopal has hardly any but a very few trite things to say about Parliament which, meeting first in May 1952 did play a notable role in the period covered—there seems to be not a syllable, for one thing, about Nehru's zeal in seeing through Parliament scientifically oriented legislation about decimal coinage and the metric system of weights and measures. Gopal's after all, is a voluminous biography and rouses expectations that essential details would not be omitted.

Gopal was the director of the historical division of the External Affairs Ministry when India-China unpleasantnesses obtruded evilly on the scene. No insinuations are intended but it is a pity he chooses, from an apparently academic eminence, to cast stones at Indian diplomacy rather recklessly. Who can hold a candle to Radhakrishnan, but perhaps it is not in order to dismiss his successor in our Moscow Embassy as one "who courted the Russians but was not significant politically". K. P. S. Menon was by no means the non entity that Gopal calls him, 'K. P. S.' whom Stalin received twice personally. (a rare event in Moscow, signifying our country's importance and our envoy's also). 'K. P. S.' who has contributed to Indo-Soviet amity more perhaps than Gopal relishes. There is no room in this review to refer in detail to the tendency in this biography to lowlight that amity and to present Nehru as almost always more than ordinarily suspicious of the *bonafides* of socialist countries. In relation to China, India's distinguished Ambassador, K. M. Panikkar, is portrayed as little better than a nin-compoop whose "nimble wit" should not have been preferred to the capacity of "efficiently operation" by such experienced I.C.S. 'hands' as G. S. Bajpai (*vide* p. 107). It may well be that Panikkar, enjoying his innings in Peking, was not astute enough; if such *faux pas* at the failure correctly to communicate to China India's preference for 'suzerainty' instead of 'sovereignty' in relation to Tibet needed elucidation and fixation of responsibility for default, it was a task for the Ministry, from the Prime Minister down to the rest in the line. Gopal,

however, is not content with some unnecessarily malevolent comments that hit not only Panikkar but also Nehru. Again, there is no room here for elaboration, but it is a pity that Nehru's chief Indian biographer chooses virtually to stigmatise India's China policy to be just naive, to denigrate even India's role before, during and after Bandung, to stress such things as Nehru's proximity to the 'West' even over the Suez War (1956), his misgivings over 'real, existing socialism' during, for example, the 1956 crisis in Hungary, his allegedly clear antipathy towards communism and communists in India, to refuse to recognise Nehru's long-held perceptions about Afro-Asian Solidarity, his links with such people as Kenyatta and Nasser and Nkrumah, so that when he died, the Moroccan delegate at the United Nations could speak of him as "the sculptor of the ethics of our part of the world"—a judgment of which there is no premonition in Gopal's survey.

The writing of this book is chaste, unhurried and elegant. The way it uses the tools of scholarship is admirable. From time to time his delineation of the facts, in so far as they go, is a delight. Having access to Nehru's private papers after 1947 gives Gopal a great advantage and the book will offer readers much authentic information and some rare insights. Why Gopal's debt to the Jawaharlal Trust that made him general editor of Nehru's selected works and provided him with facilities unexampled perhaps in the annals of Indian research, however, appears inexplicable. The volume, in any case, reads easily and attractively, revealing a great deal of significant information on the basis of which 'Nehruana' might turn out a truly worthwhile quest. It is a pity, however, that almost a trifle churlishly, and somewhat inconsistently with its earlier contents and even judgments, the book nearing its conclusion (p. 316) reads: "His (Nehru's) was, in fact, a commonplace mind, nourished by idealism and passion and strengthened by reflection". This is a somewhat strange juxtaposition, for while Jawaharlal undoubtedly failed the sterner tests of history, while greatness in the epochal sense clearly escaped him, "commonplace" is no adjective to label on "his mind". Gopal, professionally, knows more perhaps than anyone else about what Jawaharlal wrote, and also—if his sights were unblurred—about what Jawaharlal did and had ached and yearned to do in his life-time and in a situation as predicated in hoary India, unsure about her place in an unfamiliar world. Let there be no adulation which is both senseless and insensitive. But let there be a better balancing of judgments than in Gopal's doubtless important work.

Hiren Mukerjee

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SPOTLIGHT ON SINO-INDIAN FRONTIERS. By Karunakar Gupta
 Calcutta: New Book Centre, 1982; vi + 178 pp., Rs. 30.

In recent years, Dr. Karunakar Gupta has performed the very useful service of bringing to the attention of the public certain facets of the Sino-Indian border controversy heretofore known only to scholars. *Spotlight on Sino-Indian Frontiers* is essentially a restatement of his previously published views, but with the happy addition of an excellent and insightful introduction by the late Sourin Roy.

Basically what Dr. Gupta has to say is that most of the Sino-Indian frontier has never been legally defined and that at various times in history what came close to being official dishonesty was practiced to obscure this fact. Dr. Gupta's views on the history of the McMahon Line and the frontier in Aksai Chin meet the test of historical accuracy and scholarly probity. His revelation of the essential fraud perpetrated by Sir Olaf Caroe by first recalling and then re-issuing a basically counterfeit version of *Aitchison's Treaties*, Volume XIV of 1929, is particularly telling. Indian policy, governmental ineptitude and the inadequacies of the official white paper all come in for well-deserved criticism, although a more expanded discussion of the "powerful American lobby" that was supposedly instrumental in shaping Indian policy would have been useful. In conclusion, one cannot help but applaud the author's plea for open access to official materials for all scholars at the earliest possible moment.

Robert A. Huttenback

COMMUNISM IN KERALA, A Study in Political Adaptation. By T.J. Nossiter, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983; 426 pp., Rs. 130.

Ever since 1957 when it returned a democratically elected communist government, Kerala has been attracting many curious scholars from the Western capitalist societies. Almost all of them tried to read a pattern in Kerala that would fit in with their own concepts of Asia's political evolution. In the late 1950's and early 60's when the Chinese revolution was riding the wave of popularity, Kerala was seen as "the Yenan of India". For the post-Vietnam intellectuals, after what they saw in Pol Pot's Cambodia, the effort was to read in Kerala a tropical version of the ideologically confused Euro-communism. Even this left many a question unanswered—especially the extent of domestication of an ideology which considers any reform a cardinal sin. Dr Nossiter's area of study is the political

adaptation of Kerala's communists and their final transformation into "just another party" in the state's present coalition politics.

This process of political adaptation is probably more significant than any other aspect of communism in Asia. For that, there is no better laboratory than Kerala where political parties split like bacteria in a tissue culture, all split parties following parallel ideological lines. The complex interaction of tradition, theory and expediency has produced a unique Marxist culture in this state physically incapable of any armed revolution.

Informally Nossiter's book has two parts. The first part, dealing with events upto the year 1957, is a brilliant analysis of the socio-political milieu which threw up the first communist state administration in India. Almost all significant factors that contributed to it have been studied meticulously. These include demographic pressures, growing literacy, desperate levels of unemployment particularly among the educated, the break-up of the joint families, the role of religion and caste, industrial backwardness, trade unions, party organisation, the ownership of land and so on. No attempt has been made to suggest any particular reason for the fascination of Malayalees, of all people in India, for communism, though Dr Nossiter specifically rejects the assumptions of earlier commentators as inadequate. Yet, in passing, he has some revealing ideas. Communism came very late to Kerala—almost a quarter century after the first party cell was formed in Bombay. Their first significant enterprise was the underground movement of the late forties and early fifties, based on the Calcutta thesis. Brutal police repression gave a halo of martyrdom to number of card-carrying party members. With this as political capital, their performance showed a compounded growth in the 1950's. As a result, Kerala communists had never really an occasion to answer inconvenient questions regarding the Stalinist purges, or their party's role in the freedom movement—questions that stood in their way elsewhere. The strategy of infiltrating into the Congress party during freedom struggle worked extremely well in Kerala and almost all important leaders of the party had their early political schooling in the Congress party.

By the time the party recovered from its temporary insanity caused by the Calcutta thesis, the communal politics of Kerala provided the ideal breeding ground, especially in the erstwhile Travancore region. The loaves of political freedom were split there almost equally between two leading communities—Nairs and the Syrian Christians—while the backward sections, particularly Ezhavas, were in search of a forum of their own. And communists filled this bill. It became a party of Ezhavas and other backward classes led by trained leaders coming from Nair and Christian communities. This formula worked till the split of the party which in the Kerala context was also a rebellion against the leadership. (As a result, the pro-Moscow CPI was left with most leaders and few

followers). From the beginning the communists were pitted against the Congress party whose staunch support came from the Church—till the Christians formed their own many Kerala Congresses—all supported by the Church.

The first part of the communists' adaptation to the local environment was their informal acceptance of the theme of caste as the dominant political factor. Can this be termed an original contribution of the Kerala party to the world communist movement? Caste politics was, however, not as influential a factor in the Malabar region as it was in Travancore. In Malabar, the party had to reckon with the Moplah's "politics of insecurity"—a unique phenomenon which even Mahatma Gandhi could not tackle during the freedom movement. When a direct confrontation failed to wean away the Muslim masses, the communists tried to split the Muslim League—a strategy which seems to provide a working answer even today with three separate Muslim parties fighting one another in the state. This could be an original contribution of the state's leading communist EMS Namboodiripad whose intellectual prowess seems to have so impressed Dr Nossiter. But the communists, whether in power or out of the government, have always been playing with low stakes in Kerala. Within the limited constitutional authority enjoyed by states in India, there was no chance of Namboodiripad turning out to be another Pol Pot. Hence expediency determines the amount of political adaptation the party is willing to undergo.

Beyond 1957, the methodology of Dr Nossiter appears inadequate to meet the problem of information gathering. Though he is meticulous in his research of published data like newspaper clippings and party documents, the very sources are often unreliable. Modern Indian editors have a very liberal definition for publishing ethics—a fact which might come in the way of any researcher. Added to this is the author's over-generosity towards the people he has been interviewing. Communists are the same anywhere when it comes to twisting facts to suit their political needs. When he compares the roles of Namboodiripad and Krishna Pillai in the founding of Kerala's communist movement, there is a tendency to equate, which is absurd. Namboodiripad shot into prominence only when he was imposed on the state by the central leadership and his present position need not afford him a larger role in the 1940's. Another problem is in branding leaders as "moderates" and "extremists" based on their present views while explaining the party's pre-split debates. Many moderates of the 1950's have turned to be the extremists of the 70's and *vice-versa*—all today explaining away their past actions on the basis of the present views. Perhaps if Dr Nossiter had a little training in Scotland Yard, *Communism in Kerala* would have been a masterpiece. Even without that, this book is undoubtedly the best on this subject, brought out either in Malayalam or in English in the recent past.

M.P. Narayana Pillai

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF GOA AND THE PORTUGUESE IN INDIA. By Henry Scholberg with the collaboration of Archana Ashok Kakodkar and Carmo Azevedo, New Delhi: Promilla & Co., 1982; xix + 413 pp. + 4 pls., Rs. 300.

The author of this work, Prof. Henry Scholberg, has already carved out for himself a prominent niche in the world of bibliographers. An internationally known specialist in South Asian historical documentation, he has evinced particular interest in the records of the European Powers in India. In 1970, he covered the British rule in India through his publication: *The District Gazetteers of British India—a bibliography*, followed in 1973 by *Bibliographie des Français dans l'Inde*. The present work is the third of the series covering Goa and the Portuguese in India. Of late, enterprising efforts of certain scholars, through the holding of seminars and workshops, have aroused considerable interest in the story of Goa's past and the Portuguese rule in India. This work is apposite, therefore, as an attempt to provide easy access to the sources for the study of the Portuguese presence in India extending over a period of five centuries.

In this work, the author has attempted to identify and itemize materials available in libraries, churches, archives and museums of Goa and Lisbon in particular, and other regions in general. Under specific subject headings he has listed them, each in an itemised form with relevant bibliographical details, at the same time indicating their locations. Besides covering works in Indian languages as Konkani, Marathi, Kannada and Hindi, the author has included works in European languages as English, French, Portuguese, German and others. There are some works in Japanese and other Asian languages too. With the help of his collaborators, the author has attempted an ambitious task of providing as full and comprehensive a coverage as possible. Most of the works cover the period 1497 to 1961, but the time frame has been stretched at either end. While care has been taken to include only the titles as have been verified, a few exceptions have been made and titles not known to be available at present have been noted also.

The bibliography is not fully annotated, but in some items helpful indications as to their contents have been attempted. In each item, complete bibliographical details have been given, such as, author, title, collation and imprint. At the same time, sources wherefrom it can be obtained have been given also. The key to location symbols, given on pp. xvii-xix, shows that institutions in Asia, Europe and U.S.A. have been covered fairly extensively. Items included are printed books, titles in anthologies, and unpublished works as theses,

dissertations and reproductions of actual MSS. While in a separate section itemised lists of journals and newspapers of relevance to Goa are given, there is no attempt to cover periodical contributions in the work. Perhaps, the author may attempt another volume to cover serial materials.

An index has been provided to the bibliography, covering over 40 pages and this is followed by a supplement wherein special papers on sources of Indo-Portuguese history are given *in extenso*. One of them provides an overview of the public and private archives on Indo-Portuguese history, and another deals with the Church archives pertaining to Goa and the Portuguese in India. These are very useful contributions, competently written, and they enhance the value of the work. One of the collaborators (A. K. Kakodkar) has attempted to review the opportunities for research in Goa and this serves as a useful guide to the valuable sources for research that await the probe of scholars in illuminating unknown areas of Indo-Portuguese history.

The work is a valuable contribution to the study of source materials pertaining to the history of the Portuguese in India, providing comprehensive bibliographical details and facilitating access thereto. It has been very ably and competently executed. The author and the collaborators deserve our thanks for their helpful endeavours in aiding research workers interested in exploring the interesting past of Goa and the Portuguese rule in India.

D. N. Marshall

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NOTES AND QUERIES

Economic History

In his letter to the editor dated September 4, 1983, Professor Holden Furber, rightly regarded as the doyen among historians of Modern India, expresses his high admiration for the work done by our economic historians. He writes that he is much struck with recent progress in Indian economic history of the early modern period and directs attention to the importance given to it by experts in other fields, e.g., the recent 3-volume work of Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle, économie, et capitalisme, XV-XVIII siècle*. "More and more teachers," he notes, "are beginning to wake up to the fact that as the age of European imperialism recedes into the past, the study of these centuries becomes more and more relevant."

There have been two approaches to economic history; cliometric and traditional. The former places modern economic theory at the centre, while the latter, though profiting from the theory, avoids the mathematical notions. There is hardly any doubt that the work of the cliometricians has stimulated and enriched our understanding of the past. It is, therefore, worthwhile even for those who are not economic historians to acquaint themselves with the key concepts of economic theory as a tool to gain valuable insight into the historical process.

Early Printing in Asia

In the *British Library Newsletter* (No. 29, July 1983), G. Shaw has contributed an instructive report of a conference held in Paris from 9th to 11th March 1983, devoted to the book and printing in the Far East and India. "It was the interplay over the centuries", he says, "of the xylographic and the typographic printing traditions which emerged most strongly from the twenty papers delivered during the conference."

Before vegetable paper appeared from the second century onwards, the writing surfaces used in China consisted of narrow strips of bamboo and other woods.

At present the earliest example of xylography comes from Korea: a single woodblock-printed *dharani* or Buddhist incantation, assigned to 751. There is evidence of xylography in Japan less than fifteen years later in the so-called *Hyakumantō dharanis*, the Japanese xylography reaching its finest flowering

during the Edo period (1603-1867). The evidence for China comes later: the 868 edition of the *Diamond Sutra*.

The technique of movable printing was invented in China during the Sung period (960-1279). A variety of metals were used to manufacture types, not only metal but wood, terracotta and even porcelain. Printing with metal types reached Korea during the fourteenth century, a fact which is attested by the edition of the works of the monk Päkun. Typography reached Japan from two different sources at the end of the sixteenth century, from Korea and with the arrival of the mission presses from Portugal. The former was responsible for the printing of the major classics of Japanese literature for the first time. Printing in India was due solely to European missionary initiatives. In Goa and Cochin books were printed in the vernaculars from 1577 onwards under Catholic auspices. From the early eighteenth century Protestant mission presses at Trèen quebar and Serampore were far more productive, though "the effect of all their output in terms of actual conversions was pathetically small. As one speaker put it," "by 1850 the technology of the press had been turned against those who had introduced it. The missionaries had educated a readership and trained a personnel who used the press to propagate their own religions and to spread reforming and ultimately national ideas".

Indo-Canadian History Workshop

Sponsored by the University Grants Commission, the Indo-Canadian History Workshop was conducted with éclat from 6 to 12 December by the Department of History, University of Delhi. The burden of the speeches at the inaugural session was that the constitutional development of the two countries had gone on parallel lines with the attainment of the Dominion status as the goal and in our day also they were confronted with common problems. Participating in the workshop were representatives of four Canadian and twelve Indian Universities besides local delegates from the Universities and Colleges of Delhi.

The papers read at the Workshop were "Evolution of Nationalism" by Prof. Ramsay Cook, York University, "Federalism and Provincial Autonomy as Devices of Imperial control" by Prof. P. S. Gupta, University of Delhi, "Federalism and Regionalism: the Case of Western Canada" by Prof. Car Berger, University of Toronto, "Communal and Linguistic Pulls and Pressures in Indian Nationalism" by Dr. M. Aparna Basu, University of Delhi, "Interpretation of Canadian Economic Development" by Prof. H. V. Nelles, York University, "Aspects of Colonial Economy—a Case Study" by Dr. Krishnamurty, Delhi School of Economics, "The Uniqueness of French Relationship with Canada's Native Peoples" by Prof. C. Jaenon, University of Ottawa, and "British Attitudes to Indians in the Colonial Period" by Dr. S. Chakravarty, University of

Delhi. Very illuminating discussion followed the papers which were all stimulating and original. The Workshop was a success in that both sides profited by the experience they had gained from the way each had tried to tackle the mutual problems.

The valedictory session was attended by His Excellency William T. Warden, High Commissioner for Canada to India who in a thoughtful speech observed *inter alia* as follows:

"Canadians themselves recognize the marvellous contribution to Canada's own development which has been made by many thousands of Canadians of Indian origin. India in its own way participated in the building of Canadian nationhood. Indians today are to be found in all areas of Canadian life. Indians have added a new dimension of cultural richness to the Canadian mosaic."

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