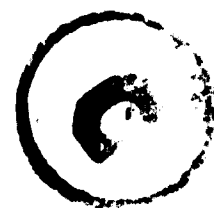


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GIUSEPPE TUCCI

THE GREATEST ORIENTALIST OF THE CENTURY

The present volume of **INDIA PAST AND PRESENT** is dedicated to the memory of Professor Giuseppe Tucci not only to recall his lasting services to Indian History and Culture but also to acknowledge the significance of his teaching to Europe and the Asian countries to whom he devoted a life time of prodigious toil.

Professor Emeritus of the University of Rome from which he took the doctorate in 1919 and where he taught for years, Tucci was born at Macerata on 5th June, 1894. Doctor *honoris causa* of the Universities of Macerata, Kolozavar, Delhi, Louvain, Teheran, Kathmandu, and decorated with the title of **Deshikottama** for his perfect knowledge of Sanskrit by the University of Vishvabharati, Shantiniketan, he was the foremost among the greatest orientalist of our tormented century and the last in time of this close circle of explorers, illumined by such prestigious names as Albert von LeCoq, A. Grunwedel, Sir Aurel Stein, Paul Pelliot.

Tucci combined in himself extraordinary powers seldom found together in a single person, a prodigious memory, a rare facility to master one after another languages spoken and written with a bewildering diversity, an insatiable curiosity, a most lucid intelligence, a dependable intuition, a capacity to synthesize, a mind in continual ferment, powers which helped to produce an exceptional scholar. Having learnt Greek and Latin at the *lycee* in his home town, he studied at the University of Rome Sanskrit under Carlo Formici and Chinese under Giovanni Vacca, teachers to whom he dedicated his first work : **Storia della Filosofia Cinese Antica** (1922), and his linguistic equipment included besides Coptic and Japanese, Mongolese languages and Tibetan, most of the Indian languages of the Indo-European family and almost all the languages of modern Europe.

An ordinary mortal would have gone to roost having won a chair at the University to prosper therein till the day of his retirement. Not so Tucci. For ever on the alert for something new and original with the vast horizon of an explorer, he was not of the type to vegetate. He availed himself of the friendships formed during the days of his oriental studies in Rome to open the gateway to India. He landed in Bombay at a little over thirty years of age, thus initiating a community of spirit with India, a bond which was never broken, the one and the other having remained intimately loyal to it. Appointed professor of Italian at the Vishvabharati University, he spent five fruitful years there teaching Italian at first and Chinese and Tibetan thereafter.

These were years of wholesome impact on Tucci who came in intimate contact with our giants of the times, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi. He perfected his knowledge of Sanskrit and above all Tibetan, an arcanum of a few specialists such as Faschke, Chandra Das and A.C.Bell. He came to love India as his second motherland even accepting an invitation, when his health was visibly declining, to attend a seminar on Eros and Thanatos. On her part India esteemed him as one her most beloved sons and conferred on him the coveted Jawaharlal Nehru Prize for International Understanding. Tucci's last dying words were in Sanskrit, a rhythmic citation, says Mario Bussagli in his tribute to his renowned teacher in *Il Tempo* "probably composed by himself. His soul was so permeated with Indian thought that the last phase of his existence was illumined by the thought of the harmony of a language which constituted for him the essence of his own personality."

This was only one facet of his multiform personality and character. Not the least of his assets were the physical vigour and power of resistance which made him immune to all discomfort and fatigue. It was not unusual for him, having travelled for ten to twelve hours at the rate of three miles or more even in inclement weather of lashing wind and burning sun, to bring his daily quota of travel to successful completion. A born organiser, all his scientific expeditions were brilliantly equipped with the closest attention given to all accessories : food, dress, means of transport including yaks, ponies and porters, mules and men, finance, night-lodgings, tents, and many things besides. And he played the diplomat, steering clear of parties and currents, church and sects, in finding the sinews for his numerous projects from the powers that be, some times making his interests identify with those of the state, and at other times seeking the support of enlightened patrons like the industrialist Piccinini.

TIBET

Between 1927 to 1948 Tucci led eight expeditions to Tibet, covering thousands of miles on foot, as this was the best way to have a feel of the land. His object was to study the different schools which Buddhism introduced when it entered Tibet such as the Tantric ones, the theories and liturgies they developed offering much of interest to a student of religious psychology or yoga techniques. Moreover, Tibet seemed to have continued the Indian traditions of scholastic logic, a legacy of the Buddhist universities which had fallen a prey to the Islamic onslaught. He was, however, primarily interested in the Mahayana and Tantric Buddhism, hoping to find in Tibet exemplars of texts which had perished in India thanks to neglect and at the hands of the vandal. He was also interested in knowing from close quarters Buddhism as it was actually lived apart from its bookish lore, which he could do in Tibet by cultivating the monks in their monasteries.

In the course of these expeditions, Tucci was able to collect an enormous mass of material consisting of books, documents and objects d'art. Tucci was all things to all men in Tibet. He disarmed suspicion by appearing as a pilgrim, visiting holy places, which was of course no mere pose, given his Buddhistic proclivities. He acquiesced in every thing that was demanded by the Buddhist ritual, even getting himself admitted to the presence of the Dalai Lama not as a foreigner but as a believer. He thus gained access to the monasteries with their libraries and artistic treasures without number and was able to build up, as he puts it, "a rich collection of Tibetan books; to reconstruct in part at least the course of Tibetan art, and reveal the various influences it has undergone; and to study the ruins of many monasteries which, particularly in western Tibet, are wonderful monuments to artistic sensibility and religious fervour built in a country now largely deserted."

The upshot of this stupendous endeavour were the works published by the Academy of Italy, the State Library and the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (IsMEO), the seven volumes of *Indo-Tibetica* (1934-1941) and the *chef d'oeuvre* in three volumes, massive in every sense of the word, eighteen kilos alone in weight, and unsurpassed in learning till the present moment: *The Tibetan Painted Scrolls* (1949). Divided into four parts, the author gives, often relying on the hitherto unused sources, an outline of events from the twelfth century down to the establishment of the Chinese supremacy, besides a sketchy picture of Tibetan literature. This is followed by a chapter on the history of historiography, stating clearly what has been possible to ascertain concerning Tibetan culture with the existing source material. Next comes a succinct account covering the most important monuments of Central Tibet, used as a chronological reference to fix the dates of many of the *tankas*, as these paintings are called, and determine their schools. A discussion follows regarding the origin and characteristics of Tibetan painting, its relation with that of the neighbouring countries and the influence of iconometric rules. A section is devoted to the liturgies of consecration (which impart life to the *tankas* and makes them worthy of worship), and their classification into groups and schools. In apposition with these are the illustrations of single *tankas*, numbering 172 in all. Then there comes a disquisition on the sources of Tibetan history and culture, the foremost among them being the portion of the chronicles of the fifth Dalai Lama containing the genealogies of families which by then had ascended into the horizon of history. Next are the pedigrees of the princes of Gyantoe, followed by that of Zulu. The work would have remained incomplete without a word on the cult that inspired Tibetan art. Hence the treatise closes with an account of Vajrayana, i.e., that particular aspect of late Buddhism which, having early been extinguished in India, was transplanted to the Roof of the World and, taking a firm root, prospered there.

It has often been remarked that Tibetan paintings have little originality and are too subservient to the canons of iconometry to be able to give individual forms to their own fancy. They follow a set pattern but are incapable of any creative power. **The Tibetan Painted Scrolls** joins issue with this viewpoint. It holds that the value of Tibetan art lies in the skill and wisdom with which the artists grade their shades and place them near one another, "conferring to the whole the iridescent life of a rainbow." Tibetan painting is a reflection of the Tibetan soul. It is a mirror in which one can discern what these people owe to India, China and Central Asia and what they themselves have created. This painting is moreover a panoramic view of the different stages in the cultural development of the Tibetans and also the spiritual history of a people living under the shadow of religion.

It is, however, paradoxical that though Buddhism with its belief in Universal Pain was calculated to induce in the people a pessimistic view of the world, the Tibetans developed a joyful outlook on life. According to their belief, death is not the door to nothingness or eternity but the joining of two links in an endless chain, or a definite passing away for ever from the illusion of time and being. It is ideas such as this that turned the Tibetans away from the *contemptus mundi* that cast its gloom over other countries of Asia. Recording things as he saw them in Tibet and not attempting to draw a romantic picture thereof, Tucci says that he found great openness in every one he met and it appeared to him that "seemingly discordant thoughts, moods and feelings lived peacefully side by side, conducive to the greatest simplicity rather than complexity, of their spirit, with none of the harshness that comes from unyielding certainty." Buddhism forbids the slaughter of living beings of any kind, but the Tibetan is a meat-eater. He leaves it to butchers the killing of animals, merely abstaining from being present when they are at work. Again, the belief that everything is an illusion, and the only reality the elusive and indefinable void, makes the Tibetan admire the ascetic way of life, but that does not make him renounce the world himself.

A striking feature of Tibetan Buddhism or Lamaism, as it is called, is that it places man above everything and in doing so it gradually eases the rigidity of Karma itself. "For unlike early Buddhism where man has no choice but to reap what he has sown, the fruit of his action, the Great Vehicle (Mahayana) and the magico-gnostic Vehicle (Vajrayana) assert that Karma can be modified, halted, channeled along other paths, or dissolved altogether."

NEPAL

The Tibetan researches of Tucci came to an abrupt end when the altered political situation in Tibet, consequent on the Chinese

occupation, put an insurmountable barrier to any further exploration of the country. He thereupon turned to Nepal, a mosaic of races which had, one interlocked with another, wound its way into the valleys and attempted to scale the mountains, but whose history was still a *terra incognita*. From 1950 to 1954 he led six expeditions into this vast Himalayan region which brought to light remnants of successive civilisations with which he was able to reconstruct the complex events of a people who form a bridge between the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia. To begin with, he had vague information from old Tibetan sources of the existence in ancient times in Western Nepal of independent principalities whose past had been lost in obscurity. It was, therefore, a pleasant surprise when at a place called Dulla he came across long inscriptions on very tall steles describing the achievements of generations of Malla kings. Two families, the Palla and the Malla, fused into a single stock by the eventual extinction of the former, extended their conquests into western Tibet, and in order to make their rule more acceptable to their subjects converted themselves to Buddhism. Curiously enough, they did not abandon their old religion and thus enjoyed a twofold nomenclature, being worshippers of Shiva in Nepal and Buddhists in Tibet. The empire was well organized with roads binding together its extreme confines, composed of human medley of varying tradition, language and customs. The roads also assured internal security, enabling troops to be moved easily to the remotest parts, and they helped to promote trade, which must have been one of the principal sources of the empire's prosperity.

Three religions vied with one another for the allegiance of the people - Bon, Buddhism and Hinduism. In the eighth century Bon had been organized into a system by Mi-bo-shen-rab who was born in Western Tibet, a few days march away from Charka where and in a few other places Tucci found it practised. It borrowed some of its ideas and ceremonies from Buddhism and probably also from Manichaeism and Nestorianism which seem to have entered Tibet through the central Asian trade routes. From these religions Bon accepted the notion that the world is an incessant struggle between good and evil. Good is a pure light that shines, uncontaminated within us. We must defend it against the darkness of the shadows that threaten to quench it, and must struggle to restore it to its original freedom and clarity. The Bonpo do not, in the Tibetan manner, expose their dead in the mountains to be devoured by wolves and vultures, nor do they burn them, but throw them into the river. Pale is the last village where Bon still survives, and a few miles away, Hinduism begins having slowly made its way from India. It is weak-kneed and had perforce to bow to a primitive religious world, assimilating the indigenous beliefs. Buddhism was almost on the way out, its survival being now reinforced by the activities of a few ascetics.

The people appeared to Tucci as if they had only just emerged from a primeval simplicity. Practically without contact with the central government, the regime that governs them is a sort of village commune, an autonomous unit ruled by a council of five elders who elect their own head. In this part of the country without roads, without posts, without telephonic or telegraphic communications, these little inhabited islands go on governing themselves. From these frontier areas which, he says, "because of the geographical conditions and the circumstances, are in a very tense situation, no news, even the most serious, can reach the capital in less than a month and then only by means of couriers exposed to the risks and perils of the paths and the climate. The government is a remote entity of which they talk only to stress its absence." Nor did he find in a stretch of five hundred miles of the journey a single hospital or a dispensary or a nurse.

Tucci had judged from the accounts of the Chinese travellers, who knew Northern India as the palm of their hand, that excavations in the Swat Valley in Pakistan were sure to yield rich archaeological treasures as against the opinion of two English archaeologists who had thought otherwise. These latter had failed to grasp the significance of the objects that had surfaced in the area and had confined their attention to finds of secondary importance. Started under the direction of Tucci, the excavations at Butkara, a Buddhist settlement dating from Asokan times, have enriched the history of religious art and thought as a result of the enormous mass of bas-reliefs, statues and objects of worship recovered there. Under the terms of the agreement entered into with the government of Pakistan, a part of the treasures found should go to the National Museum of Oriental Art which Tucci was instrumental in founding in Rome as worthy of a city inferior to none of the great European capitals.

Archaeological researches in the Swat Valley were followed up by those in Afghanistan (1957) and Iran (1959), undertaken by the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (IsMEO). They, however, came to a premature close owing to the precipitation of political and military events in these countries, detrimental to any successful prosecution of the projects. At the same time Tucci had turned his attention to the preservation of the artistic and cultural legacy as also restoration work. This was carried out under his direction by IsMEO at the prestigious centre of the ancient Iranian civilisation, Persopolis. IsMEO also attended to the Islamic monuments of Esfahan, in particular Ali Qapu, Cehel Sotun, Hasht Behesht, work which has brought it international recognition in that the Aga Khan Prize for architecture was conferred on it at Lahore in October 1980. IsMEO has assisted in the setting up of the Museum of Swat at Saidu Sharif in Pakistan and, in Afghanistan,

at the reorganisation of the Islamic collections of the Museum of Kabul and at the arrangement of the collections of the Museum of Islamic Arts of Ghazni in the mausoleum of Sultan Abdul-Razzaq, Rauza, in the construction of the Museum of Ghazni and at the initiation of the work of restoration of the minarets of Masud III and of Bahram Shah.

IsMEO had been founded by Tucci with a rare foresight as far back as 1933 to promote and organize Asian studies and to do research and guide it personally at the centres which he had in mind to start in Asia. In his view IsMEO should become a malleable instrument to carry through scientific projects of vast range which demanded a competence at once multifarious and disparate. The universities were inadequate for this purpose, failing as they did in their essential duty towards the younger generation of kindling in them new interests, inducing in them a new and vivacious curiosity and leaving them free in their chosen fields after stimulating their intelligence. Working might and main, he transformed IsMEO into an institution of inter-disciplinary approach where philological and historical research is conducted at a high level and philosophical and religious thought studied in depth, and it has become what with due consideration given to the so-called auxiliary sciences naturalistic and anthropological - the chief centre of archaeology in Italy, if not in the world. As befitting a research institute of its magnitude and importance, IsMEO has provided itself with an extensive library and a fund of Tibetan manuscripts, richest outside the Peoples' Republic of China. Its archives contain documents and photographs of the Tibetan expeditions of great historical importance, and it has a centre each for excavations and archaeological research in Asia, for oriental research and Italo-Asiatic cultural relations with whatever countries with which active and friendly relations are maintained. Rather than have its own museum, IsMEO has loaned its precious pieces and collections of artistic and archaeological value, specially of the Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhara, to the National Museum of Oriental Art, a sister institution founded by the Italian Government in 1957. And it is to its credit that it has been publishing the immense mass of material gathered by Tucci in the course of his expeditions and studied by him and his collaborators and students in its two well-known series - **Oriental Series** and **Rome and Reports and Memoirs of the Excavation Centres and Archaeological Researches in Asia**. The former running in its fifty-second volume and the latter its nineteenth have added greatly to our knowledge of the area of the encounter between East and West lying on the eastern track of Alexander the Great, of the zone of the confluence of the great civilisations of Asia, and the extension of Buddhism from India to China, Tibet and Central Asia.

EURASIA

These multiform activities of Tucci are to be accounted for by his unswerving devotion to an ideal which he had conceived early in life, the historical unity of the two continents of Europe and Asia - Eurasia. This ideal was the constant motif of all his work, whether as a student of Asian civilisations or in the first studies of Buddhism and his first expeditions to the Roof of the World, his successive researches along the long road to Swat or in Afghanistan or Iran. Eurasia is an ideal of human solidarity, founded on the knowledge of a common cultural and spiritual heritage which links Asia to Europe as two parts of an undivided continent. Coupled with this motif was the incentive of humanism which is capable of demolishing whatever wall between East and West which centuries of misunderstanding has created. For Tucci humanism is the consideration of man subject to whatever experience and understanding of him as living "everywhere, under every sky, and in every clime," always as "the same creature, who suffers and deceives himself and exalts himself and whose greatness is in his solitude and restless and changeable sociability. This mutation, however, conforms to a continuity which moves like an individual but rests in the personified immortality that is granted to him; meaning that the slow, construction of his identity and culture, always renovating as something imperishable, survives the langour, exaltation and excitement of the incurable hysteria that is history *Sabar upar manush tahar upar nahi* - above all else is man - there is nothing above him. It follows therefore that exploration is "to retrace with the aid of science and imagination the road of time and restore to the light the events of the past, to make them once more alive, to justify them and find once more in them the eternal human values." As he said when asked what could there be of interest in arid Nepal: "Whenever there is one man, one only, there we are too; and where there is a memory of the past there we shall find fresh forms of the same illusions, fresh evidence, different but not discordant, of the basic patterns of the human spirit."

Tucci thought that it was the mission of Italy to effect and cement the Eur-Asiatic understanding and amity, observing in a speech at the Silver Jubilee celebrations of IsMEO: "Italy finds itself in a particularly favourable situation; it has not thrown in Asia seeds of rancour, because it has never thought of founding a colonial empire. Rather with its ancient traditions which are reinforced and illumined by the incessant work of travellers, missionaries and scholars, it has sought to reveal the spiritual conscience of Asia, to describe the real situation, to diffuse true information of our scientific thought and inspirations of the Works of art, intent on seeking the points of agreement and not contrast, to estimate and not humiliate."

By the proper approach of his scientific and cultural work, Tucci gave a powerful impetus to this mission of Italy, besides placing it on the higher echelons of Oriental scholarship.

George M. Moraes

P.S. In the compilation of this editorial, I have availed myself of the tributes paid to the late Professor by his collaborators and pupils, Mario Bussagli, Raniero Gnoli, Fosco Maraini and Sebastino Moscati in the Italian national press and the commemoration speech by Gherardo Gnoli, President of IsMEO, at the condolence meeting held on 7th May, 1984, presided over by the President of the State of Italy.

In his article on Tucci appearing in *Il Tempo*, Mario Bussagli has selected the following works from the vast bibliography of the polyhistor as signifying the scientific value of his writings or the trend of his religious thought:

La Storia della Filosofia Cinese Antica (1922). *Il Buddhismo* (1926). Pre-Dinnaga Buddhist Texts on Logic from Chinese Sources (1928). Doctrines of Maitreya (natha) and Asanga (1930). Indo-Tibetica (Vols. 1933 to 1942). Cronache della Missione Scientifica Tucci nel Tibet Occidentale del 1933 (1935). Santi e Briganti nel Tibet Ignoto (1937, 1978). Teoria e Pratica del Mandala (1949, 1969). Italia e Oriente (1949). Tibetan Painted Scrolls (Three sumptuous volumes on the history, culture and art of Tibet, 1949). Preliminary Report on two Scientific Expeditions in Nepal (1956). Minor Buddhist Texts (Part I 1956, Part II 1958, Part III 1971). Storia della Filosofia Indiana (1957, 1977). Il Trono di Diamante (1967). Tibet, Land of Snows (1968; ed. Italian and English). Die Religionen Tibet (in Tucci-Heissig, Die Religionen Tibet und der Mongole, 1970). Opera Minora (2 Vols., 1977). Archaeologia Mundi. Tibet (1973). Buddhism (in Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1974). Le Religioni del Tibet (1976). Nepal. Alla Scoperta del Malla (1960, 1963, 1977). La Via dello Swat (1963, 1979). On Swat, the Dards and connected problems (1977).

It may truly be said of Tucci that he died in harness (5th April, 1984). He was then working on a project entitled *Eros e Thanata* and his notes and recensions had already been appearing from the January number (1984) of *East and West*.

Professor Luciano Petech has written to me in his letter of 11th October, 1985, that he and the President of IsMEO are looking for some one from among their colleagues to write a full-length article on Professor Tucci's contribution. I am grateful to both for this kind courtesy. My grateful thanks also go out to Ms. Anna Maria de Angelis for supplying me with newspaper cuttings on the bio-data of the great Professor. This article on him will appear in the next issue (Vol. II, No.2) of *India Past and Present*.



THE INDUS VALLEY WRITING AND RELATED SCRIPTS OF THE 3RD MILLENIUM

Clyde Ahmad Winters

The symbols used in the Indus Valley writing are similar to other writing systems dating to the first half of the Third Millennium B.C. or earlier. The Indus Valley writing is analogous to Egyptian pottery signs, Cretan Linear A, Proto-Elamite, Archaic Sumerian of Uruk, Libyan writing, and Manding.¹

The Indus Valley was called Dilmun, by the Sumerians.² The founders of Indus Valley civilization were Dravidian speakers.³ These Dravidian speakers formerly lived in the Proto-Sahara.⁴ The Proto-Sahara was also the original home of the Elamites, Sumerians and the Manding Speakers.⁵

The Dravidians after 3000 B.C. left the Sahara to settle in parts of Asia Minor and the Indus Valley. Many scholars believe that the Lycians were Dravidian speakers.

The Lycians lived in Lycia, an ancient country on the southwestern coast of Asia Minor. The language of the Lycians was called **Trimmilai**. It was spoken up to the fourth and fifth centuries B.C. It is preserved in around 150 inscriptions and coins.

The Lycians called themselves **Trimmilai** or **Termils**, a name which parallels **Drammla** or Tamil. These people as the ancient Dravidians were of the Mediterranean type. N. Lahovary is sure that the Termils of Asia Minor and the Tamils of India had common ancestors. Although the Lycian language is now extinct, fragments of the language in Lycian inscriptions show that it is cognate with the Dravidian group. In addition the Lycian script is analogous to the Indus Valley writing.

The Indus Valley writing is also similar to the Etruscan script.⁶ The early Etruscans were called Etrusi, Tyrrenes or Rosenna in their own language. In 500 B.C. the Rosenna were conquered by Indo-Europeans who adopted their culture and much of their language. Sten Know and N. Lahovary present evidence that the Dravidian and Etruscan languages share the same vowels, identical verbs and suffixes and a similarity in numerals.⁷

The Etruscans and Dravidians also share cultural traits. For example, both groups in ancient times were ruled by a matriarchal system, and the dead were buried. In Etruscan the female diety was **Amin**, the parallel of the Tamil mother goddess **Amma**.

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Another Etruscan goddess was called **Acca**, this is cognate to the Dravidian word for mother **acca**.

The Dravidians of the Indus Valley are often referred to as Harappans. The Harappan sites have been found close to the Oxus river in Afghanistan, and there are Central Asian parallels to the Indus civilization. In addition, Harappan potsherds have been found at Oman and seals in Mesopotamia.

Cultural interaction and trade took place between the Proto-Dravidians of the Indus Valley, and the people of Egypt, Sumer and Elam in the 4th and 3rd millennium B.C.⁸ Vessels from the IVBI workshop at Tepe Yahya have a uniform shape and design with other vessels distributed from the Egypt to the Indus Valley and Soviet Uzbekistan. The intercultural vessels show clear parallel between Indus Valley and Sumerian, Elamite and Egyptian; and in southern Turkmenia at Altyn-Depe, we find imported Indus seals.

In addition to intercultural patterns which integrate the Indus Valley, Elam, Sumer and Saharan Africa, there are linguistic affinities too. N. Lahovary⁹ noted many structural and grammatical analogies of Dravidian, Sumerian and Elamite. K. L. Muttarayan¹⁰ provides hundreds of lexical correspondences and other linguistic data supporting the family relationship between Sumerian and Dravidian. C.A. Winters¹¹ and L. Homburger¹² have provided evidence of a genetic relationship between the Dravidian languages and the Manding group.

The oldest dated inscription which relates to the Indus Valley writing comes from the Western Sahara. The so called Libyan inscriptions were written by the Manding speakers.

The Manding speakers inhabited much of northwest Africa and the Western Sahara as early as 5000 B.C. Many of these Manding speakers later settled in ancient Crete.

The Western Saharan Manding speakers were called Garamantes. The center of this civilization was located in the Fezzan (Libya).¹³ The Garamantes founded Attica where they worked the mines at Laureium. The Garamantes took the goddesses Ammon and Demeter to Europe. The Garamantes also settled in Thrace in addition to Crete and Attica.

The Manding left inscriptions throughout the Western Sahara in the Air, Mauritania and Morocco. These inscriptions engraved on rocks were obituaries at talimanic burial sites.¹⁴ The earliest Manding inscriptions found so far were located at Oued Mertoutek which has been dated to 3000 B.C. by Wulsin.¹⁵ These signs are identical to the Manding signs located in the Grotto de Goundaka in Mali.

Today most of the Manding use Arabic, because they are Muslims. The ancient Manding wrote on stone, wood and dried palm leaves. Ink was made from soot and liana. The Bambara, a Manding group, claim that they maintained their archives on tablets of wood. Palm leaves were also used by the Tamils to inscribe ancient records.

Using the Vai syllabary but reading the signs in Malinke-Bambara, I have been able to decipher the Proto-Manding inscriptions found in the Western Sahara.¹⁶ The Proto-Manding syllabic script has around 200-350 signs and around 40 different forms.¹⁷ Up to this day the Manding writing is used by members of the Manding secret societies.¹⁸

Dr. J. T. Cornelius, makes a good case for the African origin of the Dravidians. Using epigraphic evidence he was able to show that the graffiti on the megalithic pottery of South India has affinities to other ancient scripts. He accurately illustrates how the signs used by the megalithic builders were found in Egyptian, Cretan and Libyan writing.¹⁹

The original Cretans used a form of writing called Linear A.²⁰ The people of Crete arrived on the Island in the 4th millennium B.C. They came to this Island from the Western Sahara.²¹ They probably spoke a Manding language, given the fact that the Manding call themselves **Mande** or **Mante** and the founders of Cretan civilization were called: **Garamantes**.²² The **Garamantes** or **Garamas** were traditionally associated with Minos of Crete and the worship of bulls.

The Indus Valley writing also has affinity to the Proto-Elamite and Uruk period inscriptions used by the early Sumerians. In 1868 Jules Oppert named the non-Semitic people of Babylonia who early used the cuneiform script the Sumerians.

The oldest written Sumerian documents come from the Uruk period. Some of these inscriptions remain undeciphered. Archaic Sumerian inscriptions have been found at Jemset Nasr, Nippur, Uruk and Kish. There are 900 different symbols in Uruk writing.²³

Concerning the uruk writing Stephen Langdon noted that "A good many new signs, unknown in later Sumerian, are present in this archaic script, and some of them are identical with signs of the Indus Valley script".²⁴

The Indus Valley script is also related to the Proto-Elamite writing. The Proto-Elamite phase of Iranian history is typified by the use of Proto-Elamite writing on clay tablets. The Proto-Elamite tablets include both economic texts the earliest form of the script dating to 3300 B.C. and a linear script which dated

to the later half of the 3rd millenium B.C.²⁵ Up to this point only the numerical Proto-Elamite economic texts are clearly understood.

The Proto-Elamites in Iran early made contact with the Indus culture, which had settlements throughout the lazurite fields of Badakhshan in northern Afghanistan. Dravidians also probably controlled the Central Asian lazurite and the route to its copper and tin fields.²⁶ Many scholars believe that lazurite was carried by Indus sailors to Mesopotamia along long established 'sea routes.

The Dravidian control of Central Asia's mining explains the identification of Dravidian speaking Yuek and Kosar (Kushana) tribes in Central Asia, before they were driven back to India by the Han and Thai tribes.²⁷ The fact that Proto-Elamite tablets are found from the Iranian plateau and the Turanian plains near Central Asia and the use of a similar script in the Indus Valley suggest that the proto-script of this type of writing was widely used between the 4th and 3rd millenium B.C. over a widespread area. We know the Dravidians of the Indus culture were important carriers of this tradition because trade and states vanished from Khorasan and Afghanistan when the Indus civilization declined.

It is clear from the evidence that a common system of record keeping was used by people in the 4th and 3rd milleniums from Saharan Africa to Iran and the Indus Valley. Moreover, the users of this common script spoke similar languages and practiced analogous cultures.

Elsewhere I have shown that the Dravidians, Elamites, Manding, and Sumerians had similar culture terms.²⁸ The evidence from deciphered Indus Valley seals, trade and mining in the 3rd and 4th milleniums, shows that writing was used by the Proto-Saharans for record keeping and religious writing.²⁹

The writing of the Dravidians, Elamites, Manding and Sumerians had its origin in the Proto-Sahara sometime after 3500 B.C. This writing, mainly used for religious purposes, was used to write talismanic messages on pottery and obituaries.

The terms for writing relate to excavate. For example, the Proto-Saharans (PS) share the term for digging a hole : Dravidian *tulai*, Sumerian *du*, *tul* and Manding *du*, *tyoto*, *tuta* : PS**tul*. The Manding terms for excavate or hollow out are *dū*, *dō*, *kulu*, etc. This shows that Proto-Saharan term for writing denoted the creation of impressions on wet clay or hard rock. The Sumerian term for carving was *du*.

Language	Writing
Dravidian	<i>cārū</i>
Elamite	<i>talū</i>
Sumerian	<i>u</i> , <i>shu</i>
Manding	<i>sēwē</i>

The Proto-Saharans either engraved their syllabic scripts on rocks, or used a stylus to engrave wet clay. This view is supported by the fact that the term for writing often has the long /ū/ attached to various initial consonants usually /l/, /r/, or /d/. For example writing in Sumerian is *Ru* and *Shu*, Elamite *Talu* and Dravidian *cārū*. The Sumerian *Shu* agrees with Manding *Sēwē*.

FOOTNOTES

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South Indian Megolithic	Brak	Proto- Elamite	Indus Valley	Oued Mertoutek	Linear A	Manding
+	+	+	+	+	+	+
	00	00	11	11	11	11
⋈	⋈	⋈	⋈		⋈	⋈
	B				B	B
1	1	1	YK		YK	YK
		◇	◇	◇		◇
U		U	U	U	U	U
⋈		⋈				⋈
		⋈	⋈		⋈	E
		⋈	⋈			⋈
		⋈	⋈		⋈	⋈
		⋈	⋈		⋈	⋈
X		X	X		X	X
⋈		⋈	⋈			⋈
		⋈	⋈		⋈	⋈



TRADE AND COMMERCE IN LADAKH DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Madhvi Yasin

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Present name of Ladakh comes from the Tibetan word La-tags. But in the past it was known by other names also, as for example Maryul,¹ Kha-Chan-Pa,² kie-Chha,³ and Ma-lo-pho.⁴ It is also called Moonland, as earth and sky seem to meet here. The territory of Ladakh is one of the most elevated regions in the world. Leh, the capital of Ladakh, is more than eleven thousand feet above the sea level and some parts of the northern district of Nubra are two thousand feet above the sea level.⁵ The passes that lead into Ladakh on its southern frontier are more than sixteen thousand feet above the sea level. It is a queer admixture of desert and valleys, which are long and flat at 15,000 feet above the sea level. Mountains that surround stand at 20,000 to 21,000 feet in height.⁶

Infertility of the soil is the cause of its thin population. Still the Ladakhi people by nature are mainly agriculturists.⁷ The small holdings and short time for agriculture due to severe winter is compensated by its geographical situation. Placed in the centre of Asia, it had been a commercial thoroughfare between Tibet, Turkistan, China and even Russia on the one hand, and Kashmir, the Punjab and the plains of India on the other.⁸ Ladakh's trade was of a varied nature. It was an import and export centre. It imported articles for its own use from India and China, and also exported articles from Kashmir and other Indian provinces to China and vice versa. The mountains of Ladakh contain huge deposits of mineral wealth, but it was not exploited fully in the nineteenth century.

Yak is the most prized animal in Ladakh.⁹ Its long hair, after being fleeced, was manufactured into blankets, coarse woollens and socks. It was kept for home trade and not for export. From Balti, or little Tibet, came vessels of gritstone for cooking, water pots and dried fruits, especially apricots were imported, partly for consumption at home and partly for export along with those of indigenous products. Balti apricots are superior to the Ladakhi apricots.¹⁰ Apricots were ordinarily bartered for wool. The two seers of Balti apricots fetched a seer of goat's wool, and one seer of apricots were exchanged for two and a half seers of sheep's wool. The main articles of import from Kashmir and the Punjab were shawls, Chintzs, Copper tinned vessels for culinary purposes, as cauldrons, chang pots, dishes, plates, tea pots, spoons and grain, intended mainly for consumption at home and Tibet. "Ghee" or butter and raisins were imported from the southern provinces of the Himalayas in exchange for salt, borax, sheep's wool, and gold dust.¹¹

Charas, a narcotic preparation made from rubbing of hemp and bhang is brought from Yarkand.¹² About 500 maunds were imported annually at the average price of three rupees per seer, amounting to Rs. 24,000 or £ 2,400. About 300 maunds of charas was consumed in Ladakh.¹³ A small quantity of tobacco was imported from Bisahar¹⁴ and Kashmir. A large quantity of tobacco was imported from Yarkand, its annual supply being stated at 4,000 maunds, or 128,000 lb., whole of which was consumed in the country.¹⁵ This proves that the consumption of intoxicating drugs in Ladakh was more than normal.

Export of Home Products

The main products of Ladakh for export were wool, tea, dried fruits, borax and sulphur. Wool was on the top of the exporting list. Wool, in Tibetan **Bal**, was the chief product of Ladakh.¹⁶ It was of three kinds: first, goat wool or **Le-na**, which was used for the shawls, second sheep wool or **bal**, which was used for blanketing, coarse clothing and stuffing pillows and mattresses, and third was the prized **Tus**. This wool fleeced from **Asali Tus**, a wild goat, was exported in smaller quantity to Kashmir. It is of a light brown colour, known for its warmth and softness.¹⁷

Tea stood second in order of the items of export. Although its consumption in the country was considerable, nevertheless it was exported to Kashmir and the Punjab.¹⁸

Dried fruits were exported in abundance from Ladakh. They consisted of apricots and small seedless raisins (commonly called currants). The export of the indigenous produce of Ladakh fetched Rs. 80,000 or £ 8,000¹⁹ or thereabout.

Minerals like borax and sulphur were also exported. The borax and sulphur mines are found together at the Puga valley,²⁰ near the bank of Rulang-Chu, a small stream full of hot springs, before it joins the Indus on its left bank, at a great distance from Leh.²¹ The borax is ejected from the bed of the stream by the numerous hot springs at various temperatures from 80° upwards. Salt is found along both banks of the stream for about two miles along with chloride of soda. It is in a damp state owing to the vapours emitted by the hot springs. In collecting borax, the surface of the salt, which is generally of light pink colour, but sometimes also green, is carefully scrapped. Afterwards, the material is smeared with fat to prevent loss by evaporation. In that shape it was transported across the Himalayas to the plains. Borax is used in preparation of certain medicines and to add glaze and lustre to gold, silver and pottery.²² The quantity of the borax annually exported was stated at 500 maunds, or 16,000 lbs. It fetched a sum of Rs. 500/- at the rate of sixteen seers per rupee.²³

Sulphur is obtained from the Puga sulphur mine,²⁴ situated at a short distance from the stream, at the foot of a gypsum cliff. The mineral is found in the form of a thin lamina disseminated throughout the rock. In all the laminas there are numerous and detached crystals, of all sizes, from that of a grain of sand to one-eighth of an inch. In detaching the sulphur, crystals are mostly reduced to powder. A small quantity of gypsum rock is also mixed with the powder. It is later exported to India. Cunningham is of the opinion that annually about 250 maunds equal to 1600 lbs. were actually exported.²⁵

Ladakh acted as a commercial centre for export and import between the Chinese provinces of Yarkand,²⁶ Khotan²⁷ and Kashghar²⁸ and India. The foreign trade of Ladakh was principally of transit through the town of Leh, the sale market or entrepot. The different communication lines from Yarkand, Chinese Tibet, Kashmir and the Punjab converge on Leh.²⁹ The main articles of trade export from China were tea, shawls-wool and borax. Besides these, a number of articles were exported from China to India, via Ladakh.³⁰ An interesting example is that of Gur or coarse sugar, exported from Kashmir through Ladakh to Yarkand, where after undergoing a tedious journey of two and a half months it was refined and crystallised and given the shape of sugar candy, which again was imported back to Kashmir. Tea imported to India from China was of three varieties - two of black and third of green colour. Their names consecutively were - **Zungcha**, **Chin Chum**, and **Copin**. It was sold in India for four rupees a seer, or 4 Sh. a pound English. The medicines **Touzu** and **Tedock** were also imported.³¹

The Indian exports to China via Ladakh and Yarkand were also considerable. Kashmir Shawls of inferior quality were very much in demand. The fine Kashmiri shawls famous in the world for their embroidery and softness were not imported due to prohibitive prices. Cheap shawls with large patterns were preferred in the Yarkand market. Their prices ranged between Rs. 50 to Rs. 300 per pair, the average being about Rs. 100/-. The total value of the shawls imported to Yarkand was about Rs. 50,000 or £ 5,000.³²

Like the shawls, brocades of the cheap variety was preferred in the Yarkand market - ranging between Rs. 50 to Rs. 300 each. About 400 pieces were exported annually, which at an average rate of Rs. 100/- each, made the total amount to Rs. 20,000 or £ 2,000.³³

Spices to the value of about Rs. 1000/-, or £ 100, were said to be annually imported into Ladakh of which Rs. 800/- worth was exported to Yarkand.³⁴

Saffron was exported to Yarkand from Kashmir via Ladakh. About twenty maunds, or 640 lbs. were annually exported, at the

rate of Rs. 40/- per seer. The total trade proceeds was about Rs. 12,800/- or £ 1,280.³⁵

Cloths of all coarser sorts and bales of flowered cotton and bright coloured chintzes were imported from India. The annual amount of about 100 maunds or 3,200 lbs. of cloth was imported valuing Rs. 10,000/- or £ 1,000. A small quantity was kept for domestic use and the rest was exported to Yarkand.³⁶

From Ladakh to Yarkand and through it to other provinces of China, the Indian exports generally consisted of madder, pearls, English Calicoes, Dacca Muslins, Chintzes Kimkhab or Zari, shields, indigo, senna, sugar, tabsir and silica found in Bambru resembling the opal in appearance, lemon juice and opium, etc.³⁷

Cunningham is of the opinion that the whole value of foreign trade of Ladakh's home produce did not exceed Rs. 80,000/- or £ 8,000.³⁸ The imports from and exports to the Chinese territories yearly were to the tune of Rs. 2,67,650/- or £ 26,765 and Rs. 2,16,000/- or £ 21,600/- respectively.³⁹ Similarly Indian imports and exports were to the tune of Rs. 2,20,200 or £ 22,020 or \$ 23,800/-. It meant that both China and India exported more and imported less.⁴⁰

Very heavy duties were imposed on the merchandise by the Ladakhi Officials.⁴¹ During the middle of the nineteenth century the total duties levied was Rs. 18,000/- per annum.⁴²

Coins

In Ladakh coins from the neighbouring states were found, on account of its being a trading centre, e.g., the golden tiles of Bokhara and Kokand (or Kokan), the sycee silver and pierced copper coins of China, the thin silver pieces of Nepal, the copper dumps of Bishar, Mughal rupees, the Nanak Sahi and Govind Sahi rupees of Ranjit Singh and the broad rupees of the British Indian, bearing the head of the Queen of England. The only Ladakhi coin minted in Kashmir was the silver Jud or Jao, which was worth one quarter of a rupee. The Nepal coins were of silver, each worth two Jaos of Ladakh.⁴³

Weight & Measure

The weights of Ladakh were almost the same as that of India - **Batti** and **Man** or Maund. **Batti** was equal to two Indian seers or thirty-two **Chhataks**. **Man** was equal to eight **battis** or sixteen seers, as was the small maund of India.⁴⁴

For weighing heavy produce especially the grain, the universal measure was **Khal**. It was of two kinds - the **Dek-Khal** and the **Shor-Khal**, meaning "Weight **Khal**" and "Measure **Khal**".⁴⁵ The common

Khal, whether by weight or measure, was the well-known quantity of a sheep's load, **luk-khal**, equal to eight **battis**, or one maund of sixteen Indian seers, or thirty two English pounds. When a large measure was to be mentioned, **Khal** was preceded by a prefix, a **Ta - Khal** (horse khal), or **Yak - Khal**, which was equal to four maunds, or 128 lbs.⁴⁶

Ladakh was the leading commercial centre for central Asia. It catered to the needs of China, Tibet, Turkistan, Kashmir, Punjab and Northern India. Leh was the commercial heart of Ladakh. Different lines of communications from Yarkand, Chinese Tibet, Kashmir and the Punjab, converged upon Leh. Four roads lead from Leh to Yarkand across the Karakoram range. Thus Leh was connected on all sides by the roads.⁴⁷

The importance of Leh as a trading centre was obvious, due to its gravitating position, as the meeting place of the great empires of Asia. Russia and Britain were both interested in it for its trade and commerce potential,⁴⁸ and wished to monopolise it.⁴⁹

Trade and commerce in Ladakh suffered from many drawbacks. There were no manufacturing industries. Though there were flocks and herds in abundance, which if properly developed would have made the country a manufacturer of the wool industry. Ladakhi women knew weaving, but only half of their number was employed in manufacturing, as they had to look after household work also.⁵⁰

Similarly there were vast resources of mineral wealth in salt, borax, natron and gold,⁵¹ which was not fully exploited. Means of communication even in the nineteenth century were not modernised and other new routes were not explored. They presented a medieval outlook in the modern age.

A quite unexpected phenomenon was that the trade and commerce in Leh was in the hands of the merchants from the Punjab, Kashmir and Kashaghar.⁵² The shopkeepers in Leh were either half castes or foreigners. Drew explains it in the light of Ladakhi's natural inclination for the soil. "They (Ladakhis) form a peasantry tilling their own land."⁵³

Mostly the barter system was in practice.⁵⁴ The traders from the south generally exchanged their goods with the men from the north, similarly the traders from the Punjab got the needed articles from Yarkand at Leh. They arrived in July and left in November, due to intense cold.⁵⁵

Thus Ladakh with all the advantages remained poor and its people were consequently illiterate. Progress and illiteracy go ill together. In present times one sees educated Ladakhis, mostly women,

dominating the poor path markets in the big cities of northern India, along with the Tibetan refugee women, especially at Srinagar and New Delhi, which proves that they have a natural talent of a good salesman.

FOOTNOTES

Low land or Red land. Cosma de Koros spells the name Mar-Yul, the "Low Country." Hienn Tsang, in 640 A.D., calls it Ma-Lo-Pho or Mar-Po, that is "red", vide Alexander Cunningham, *Ladak*, 1854, Reprint 1977, India.

Snow land, this name was also used by the Chinese travellers.

Fa Hien in 400 A.D. called it by the above name.

See F.N.I.

William Moorcroft and George Trebeck, *Travels etc.*, 1841-42, Vol. I, pp.259-60.

Cunningham, *op.cit.*, pp. 41-74.

Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladak, p. 532, Frederic Drew, *The Jummo and Kashmir territories*, 1875, p.245. "Almost all the Ladakhis are engaged in agriculture; the number of artisans is very small indeed, and of shop-keepers of that race there are hardly any; the shop-keepers of the town of Leh - the only town in the whole of country - are either half-castes or are strangers. Thus the greater part of the population of Ladakh is connected with the soil. They form a peasantry tilling their soil."

Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladak, p.532, hereinafter *Gazetteer*.

Gazetteer, p. 94; Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 209.

Moorcraft & Trebeck, *op.cit.*, p. 357. "The Ladakh apricots are much cheaper and are commonly sold in ass loads, each load weighing about sixty seers or a maund and a half paka."

Ibid., pp. 357-58

Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 244.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 245.

In British India.

Cunningham, *op.cit.*, pp. 238-39.

Moorcraft & Trebeck, *op.cit.*, pp. 348-350. "Besides the fleece of the domesticated goat, that of the wild goat, under the denomination of Asli Tus, is exported in smaller quantities to Kashmir. It is of a light brown colour, and exceeding fineness, and is worked into shawls, a species of soft cloth called Tusi, and lining for shawl wool stockings; very few shawls, however, are made from this material In general the pickers of the shawl wool are paid by the hair, but in this case the hair was considered unfit for making

into ropes. Shawls made from this material would be much softer, lighter and warmer, than those of ordinary fabric. When without being picked the Asli Tus is worked into Tusi; it forms a warm, soft cloth, of a drab or grey colour, which is much worn in the hills. It is manufactured at various places in the Punjab. A piece bought at Amritsar for ninety rupees was sold at Delhi for two hundred and fifty, but the Tusi cloth which comes to Hindustan is made from a mixture of the Asli Tus with other wool. This article must be always high priced from the difficulty of procuring the animal that produces it, the wild goat rarely venturing within gun-shot during the day, and being obtained only by snares at night when they come down from the mountains to browse in the valleys."

Ibid., p. 350.

Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 240.

Gazetteer, p. 671, Lat. 78° 25'. Long. 33° 15'. Elev. 15,200'. It is on the right bank of the Puga rivulet. It is a halting place on the route from the Isomorari Lake to Leh. The route from Leh to Hanle and Gardok also passes through it. There are sulphur mines and borax fields here. Hot springs occur in the bed of the rivulet for a length of about two miles, and its banks are quite white with saline matter that is being continually precipitated.

Vigne, *TRAVELS IN KASHMIR, LADAKH, ISKARDO*, 1842, ii. p. 343. Leh is well known to be the principal place as rendezvous for merchants travelling to and from Yarkand. The roads from Nurpur, Jammu and Kashmir, lead directly from it. There is a nearer way, I believe, by the plains of Chang Thung, to the north of Ladakh, but the jealousy of the Chinese is such that they have closed it; *Gazetteer*, Lat. 34° 10'. Long. 77° 37'. Elev. 11,538'. The capital town of Ladak.

Gazetteer, p. 30.

Cunningham, p. 240; Moorcraft & Trebeck, p. 355, It (borax) is bought in Bhot at thirty-two battis, or one maund and twenty-four seers, Delhi weight, for a rupee. By refining it loses half its weight, but the thirty-two seers sell for five or six rupees. There is a kind of smuggling trade carried on. The shepherds of these provinces receive a gratuity for pasturing the flocks of Katock, Chamba, on the borders of Lahoul, but they sometimes take half the flocks with them to Bhot for borax, instead of leaving them to graze on mountains, and are thus enabled to sell it at a lower price (Bhot is one of the names of Ladakh).

See F.N. 20.

Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 40.

H.W. Bellow, *Kashmir and Kashghar*, 1875, p. 249 Yarkand is one of the ancient cities of Tartary, and was in remote times a royal residence of the Turkish princes of the Atasyab dynasty..... Yarkand would be Tartar form of (Sanskrit) Hari Khand, "The dwelling of Hari"; *Gazetteer*, Lat. 38° 21'. Long. 77° 28'. A province in the dominions of the Amir of Kashgar, lying north of Ladak, and separated from it by the Karakoram and Western Kuenlun ranges.

- 27 *Ibid.*, Lat. 37° 10'. Long. 79° 27'. A province in the Chinese Empire lying to the north of the Eastern Kuenlun range, which here forms the boundary of Ladakh.
- 28 A commercial centre of Chinese Turkistan.
- 29 *Gazetteer*, p. 563.
- 30 Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 241; Vigne, *op.cit.*, p. 345; (1) Charas or Bang, an intoxicating extract of hemp; (2) Silver in bars or ingots, called kuru and Yambu. Kuru is a Turkish name; the Tibetans call them Yan-Bu; (3) Felts of various kinds; (4) Suklât, a kind of camlet made of camel's hair; (5) Tea, both black and green; (6) Sugar candy; (7) Russian leather, called Bulgâr; (8) Sable - Skins, called Kûndûz; (9) Gama, or black leather; (10) Kimsan, or golden coloured leather, about eight inches wide; (11) Sâgri, a green leather; (12) Lâka, a peculiar cloth made of hemp bark; (13) Velvets, both coarse and fine; (14) Mashru, or coarse silk cloth of three kinds: (i) Badshahi; (ii) Alchinbar, made at Alchi or Ilitsi; (iii) Kotani, made at Kotan; (15) Siling, a soft and fine silky woollen of two kinds: (i) Shirûn; and (ii) Gorûn; (16) Parcha Samsûn, coarse cotton cloths; (17) Parcha Zukh, coarse cotton cloths; (18) Silk both raw and manufactured; (19) Gold; (20) Gold thread, called Zirru, both genuine and false; (21) Silver; (22) Silver thread; (23) Turquoises, from Persia, through Bokhara; (24) Carpets, from Kotan; (25) Rewand-Chini, or rhubarb; (26) Chob-Chini, or China-root; (27) Gol-i-Dal-Chini; (28) Zedaary, Nirbisi from Nepal; (29) Coral, Munga; (30) Mushkanafa; (31) Tobacco; (32) Raisins; (33) Pistachio Nuts, Pista; (34) Soap; (35) Bâdian Khitai-Chinese aniseed, which is bruised and put into tea; (36) Mamira, a yellow root said to be a cure for bad eyes; (37) Galer-Patt Pat (neck stone), good for swollen necks; (38) Mulhatti, Liquorice-root, used for coughs; (39) Daryahi; (40) Ponies; (41) Salt, from the lakes of Chang-Thang.
- 31 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 344-45.
- 32 Cunningham, *op.cit.*, pp. 246-47.
- 33 *Ibid.*
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 *Ibid.*, pp. 247-48
- 36 *Ibid.*, pp. 247-48
- 37 Vigne, *op.cit.*, p. 345. It is supposed by the Asiatics to possess great medicinal properties (But Vigne doubted it); Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 243-47.
- List of Indian Articles carried to Yarkand:** (1) Laki, or skins of red leather. These are goat-skins tanned and coloured at Nurpur (British India). There is a great demand for them all over the hills, but more particularly in Ladakh and Yarkand, where bright-coloured leathers are generally employed in the manufacture of boots, and of bridles and trappings of horses. About 200 maunds, or sheep-loads (6,400 lbs weight) of these skins are said to be annually imported into Ladakh; which at the mean rate of one pound per skin, and of one rupee each, are worth Rs. 6,400 or £ 640. Half of this quantity (100 maunds) or 3,200 skins, worth Rs. 3,200/- or £ 320 are exported to Yarkand;

- (2) Cotton, flowered chintzes; (3) Cotton, coarse (ghâra); (4) Thin (gazi); (5) Chintzes of all kinds; (6) Silk, lungi of Multan; (7) Shawls, mostly coarse; (8) Jâmiwar, or shawl cloth figured in breadths; (9) Brocades, mostly coarse; (10) Turbans; (11) Opium; (12) Indigo; (13) Heron-plumes, kalgi, generally made of the feathers of the jungle fowl; (14) Shoes from Nurpur; (15) Pearls of all sizes upto one hundred rupees each; (16) Otter skins; (17) Turmeric; (18) Cardamums; (19) Ginger; (20) Cloves; (21) Black pepper; (22) Honey; (23) Tamarinds dry; (24) Sherbet, lemon; (25) Coarse sugar, Gur; (26) Nar-cachor, the root of a reed, used both as a scent and as a medicine.
- 38 Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 240.
- 39 Vigne, *op.cit.*, p. 345.
- 40 Cunningham, *op.cit.*, pp. 248-253.
- 41 *Gazetteer*, p. 563.
- 42 Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 251.
- 43 *Ibid.*, pp. 253-54; Moorcraft & Trebeck, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. 353.
- 44 Cunningham, *op.cit.*, pp. 255-56.
- 45 Moorcraft & Trebeck, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 70-71. The whole revenue of Spiti is collected in grains by a measure called khal, equal to eight pakka seers and of the value of thirteen annas. The highest tax paid by any one is fifteen khals, and the lowest seven.
- 46 Cunningham, *op.cit.*, p. 256.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 147-48. The different roads that lead to Leh on all sides are the following: (1) The western road from Kabul and the Punjab through Kashmir; (2) The south-western road from the central Punjab through Jammu, Kishtwar, and Zaskar to Leh. A branch of this road runs from Zaskar through Rukchu to Leh; (3) The southern road from Lahore and Amritsar, through Kullu, Lahul and Rakchu to Leh. A branch road from Bisahar, via Spiti, joins this road at Garo; (4) The south-eastern road from Lhasa to Garo and Indus to Leh. A branch from India, via the Niti Pass, joins this road at Garo; (5) The eastern road from Chinese Tartary, through Rudok and Valleys of Chushal and Sakte to Leh; (6) The northern road from Yarkand and Kotan, over the Karakorum mountains, and down the Shayok and Nubra rivers to Leh. The old route, which is now closed by glaciers that dam the stream, followed the Shayok from its source to Sassar, and thence either continued down that river, or across the mountains and down the Nubra river to Leh; (7) The north-western road from Balti, via the Shayok and Indus rivers, to Leh.
- 48 Moorcraft & Trebeck, *op.cit.*, Vol I, pp. 358-59.
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 73
- 51 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 358.
- 52 *Gazetteer*, p. 563.

- 53 Frederic Drew, *op.cit.*, 1875, p. 245.
- 54 Moorcraft & Trebeck, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, p. 71. Salt, wool, tea, turquoises, sheep, and goats are imported from Chanthan, and are paid for with grain, woollen cloth, and a few horses; from Bisahar and Kulu come iron, cooking utensils, brass, copper, tobacco, rice, dried fruits, tea cunts, timber, amber, and glass beads, which are paid for with grain, horses, and woollen clothes of the district, and with the salt & wool of Chanthan, although the latter is an illicit export. The iron and metal vessels of the south are sent to Leh in exchange for tea, coarse cloth, coral, and dyeing drugs, etc.
- 55 *Gazetteer*, p. 563.



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ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR : A CASE STUDY OF THE WAGHERS OF GUJARAT IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Geeta Bajpai

Social actions have been found adapting themselves to certain stimuli. Among these, the economic one has been most stimulating. The present paper examines the role of the stimulation of economic nature in the changing pattern of social behaviour of the Waghers of Gujarat, in the second half of the nineteenth century.¹

The community comprised 23% of the total population of the district of Okhamandal, tucked away in the farthest corner of the Gaekwad state, and which covered a mere 3% of the entire area of the state.²

Partly Hindu and partly Muslims, the Waghers were one of the principal, as also possibly the earliest, inhabitants of the Taluka, which was an administrative unit of the Amreli prant of the princely state, in the Kathiawar peninsula. Their origin is said to be lost in obscurity, and there are various suppositions³ regarding it. By occupation, the Waghers were first fishermen, then pirates and freebooters and lastly landholders, fishermen and sailors, as the Gazetteer of the Baroda State reports.⁴ This last statement is revealing, hence needs to be examined.

If the Waghers, by occupation were first fishermen, then pirates and freebooters and lastly landholders, fishermen, and sailors, then it is quite obvious that each of these qualifications represents a different stage in their development during a span of time. That was precisely so. It was broadly within the nineteenth century that these developments occurred, the last qualification being a development of early twentieth century when the Gazetteers were prepared.⁵ Since the focus of the present study is the second half of the nineteenth century, the changes in the Waghers' occupation from pirates and freebooters to landholders, is what has been examined.

Prior to our focussing on the second half of the nineteenth century, we may review the subject in the light of developments and circumstances of the preceding decades.

The last quarter of the eighteenth and the early years of the nineteenth century was a period of political instability and disorder. It was a period of Maratha expansion into Gujarat, in which the Gaekwads took the lead. The penetration into the Kathiawar peninsula was effected by the 'Mulukgiri' expeditions for the collection of revenues. Under these circumstances, part of the turbulence in

the nature of the community being discussed is to be traced to the climate of the region fraught with insecurity and disturbance caused by the military expeditions for the collections of dues.

Part of such an unsettled state of affairs was on account of the distance of the Amreli *Prant* which removed it from the headquarters by over two hundred miles.⁶ And the *taluka* of Okhamandal under consideration was a further hundred and sixty miles off Amreli,⁷ far beyond the periphery of effective control of the Gaekwad from Baroda. The Kathiawar Peninsula, in the early nineteenth century, was divided into many small governments, independent of each other, hence more likely to come into mutual conflict and so enhance the disturbed state of affairs there.⁸ The restiveness of the Waghers may have been further aggravated with the beginnings of effective control over Okhamandal by the combined forces of the British and the Gaekwad, in these times.⁹ The four uprisings of Waghers between 1816-1873 may thus be considered as reactions to the coercive measures against their predatory activities. These uprisings, an expression of their resentment, are to be considered not solely as a problem of law and order on the part of a turbulent people, but as a problem of survival and existence on a means of living that appears to have been the only alternative source of their livelihood, a source that was undeniably questionable.

That piracy was the principal source of subsistence was the argument repeatedly put by the community in their discussions with the English concerning the relinquishment of the practice.¹⁰ Thus a Wagher, Sadaram, was reported to have told Sunderji Sivji, the British agent for negotiations with the piratical states of Beyt and Dwarka, that piracy was the only source of his income.¹¹ Likewise Manek Mulu, the Chief of Dwarka, informed the agent of his decision to give up piracy which was one of the principal sources of his support.¹² It is evident, therefore, that their activities of piracy were on account of its being the principal, if not the sole source of living. The same is corroborated by another evidence. Where the alternative of economic opportunities existed the problem of law and order as their creation was non-existent. Thus, the Waghers of Dhrewad village, who were proprietors of rent free lands, were reported not to have joined the Wagher rebellion in 1859.

In the absence of adequate data it is difficult to establish the origin of such land grants to the Waghers. Since, however, it is certain that till the first decade of the nineteenth century piracy was the principal source of livelihood, and since the period of unsettled state of affairs in Kathiawar continued well into the mid-nineteenth century, it has been assumed that piracy, as the principal source of income, too, would have continued till then. The transformation in the Wagher character viz., from a community of plunderers and freebooters, to one of landholders, is therefore, to be considered as a development of the second half of the nineteenth century,

and hence an achievement of the rulers and administrators of that period.

The changes effecting the waghers would be seen through the three periods of Gaekwad rule from the 1850s, on the ground of convenience, which the different administrative periods afford. The beginnings of rationalisation of administration and of modernization of the state were attempted by Khanderao Gaekwad in co-operation with the British during the year 1856-1870. The primary concern of the state during these years was the centralization of authority at Baroda by the systematization of the administrative functions. This process effected a reshuffle in the arrangements of the Amreli *prant* also, where the need for effective control was even greater.¹³ The provisions made in Okhamandal were thus attuned to its peculiar problems of law and order created by the Waghers. In 1861, therefore, the *taluka* was brought under the dual control of the British and Gaekwad authorities.¹⁴ The arrangements made, continued as such till 1920 with certain modifications in 1909.¹⁵

More significant than these administrative changes, were the arrangements by which the Waghers were inducted into the cultivating classes of agricultural pursuits. This was secured by a systematically outlined policy of intermingling the Waghers with the Kanbi population. The desired objective was secured by arranging the ratios in the population of Waghers and non-Waghers so that 23% of Waghers were intermixed with 75% of the skilled cultivators i.e. Kanbis.¹⁶ Such an admixture would make for an assimilation and a dilution as it were of a character by the process akin to that in science, and referred to as osmosis, and in a social science as acculturation.

A favourable land revenue policy, along with the necessary control, was the instrument of the desired change. Accordingly, if on the one hand was light assessment, on the other was the penalty clause of assessment being raised, should any uprising occur. Thus, the rates fixed were Rs. 6-8-0 per *santi* (48 *bighas*) for *jirayat* (dry land), Rs. 2 per *santi* on *bagayat* (wet or garden land), and Rs. 5 per *mund* of *goor* (Jaggery), which was the bazaar or market price for sugarcane.

Assessment was kept light so that the very purpose of encouraging the Waghers to peaceful occupation of cultivation was not defeated. The rates imposed were half of those that the non-Wagher cultivators were obliged to pay.¹⁸ Soon after, however, even these rates were revised so as to exempt the Wagher landholders totally, thus bringing total exemption from paying the land tax. Accordingly, Col. Wallace cancelled Lt. Barton's assessment and issued instead *sanads* i.e. deeds of grant of rent free lands for cultivation. These

lands were, of course, conditional to (a) the Wagher's loyalty to the Gaekwad (b) the non-indulgence in robberies and disturbance (c) the payment of rupee one for each *santi* of land they held (d) restriction on mortgage and the sale of *salami* i.e. nominal or quit rent land and (e) not to grant asylum to thieves. The reasoning behind such a policy is seen in the policy enunciators' own words. Col. Wallace, thus wrote to Lt. Barton, "..... you are aware that I have more at heart the addiction of the Waghers to agricultural industry than the exaction of rent from them..... that you will consider the land tax they pay rather as a fund out of which advances on good security may be made to them for the purchase of seed, corn and cattle and for their plough, than as a source of revenue for the state....." ¹⁹

Thus, the means of reclaiming the Waghers from their predatory habits was by giving them an economic orientation - the basic purpose of the economic orientation being to affect the social behaviour of the people. The objective, viz., of reclaiming the Waghers, was thus secured by a rational economic action exhibited and evidenced in two ways : (a) in the rational allocation of available resources and (b) in the freedom of operation therein, conditional only to a code of conduct. The patronage extended to the community was thus in the form of a low degree of appropriation. The centralized control, together with the freedom and opportunities of operation, removed the obstacles to development - the obstacles that in earlier times had effected a pattern of behaviour.

The success of such a policy is evidenced in the requests on the part of Waghers for more lands for cultivation.²⁰ Within a decade, the once turbulent people had become adjusted to a new way of life and a new means of living. The success of the policy seen in the improvement in the material condition of the people which followed, led to a modification in the land tax. From 1865 itself, the British and the Gaekwad *sarkar* (government), reframed the land grant policy.²¹ Instead of complete revenue exemption, hitherto granted, it now adopted a sliding scale of assessment on the new lands given for cultivation. This scale, which had higher rates, was one-fourth of full assessment for the first two years, one half for the next two years, three-fourths for the next two and full assessment from the seventh year. The quantity of land granted at a quit rent of one rupee per *santi* ranged from a minimum of one *santi* to three and a half.²²

The manner in which these enhancements were made, enabling a weaker section of society to stabilize their lives and living, indicate the acumen of the rulers and administrators in sorting social problems.

Other considerations shown to the Waghers during 1860-1870 confirm the motives of the authorities viz. of orienting the community

to agriculture. They were the concessions made to them during the failure of rains in 1860 and 1867 by allowing them to move over to Kathiawar to graze their cattle, undertaking relief works to provide employment in times of similar difficulties, and advancing loans to them, as in 1868 for maintenance, wells and the purchase of cattle.²³ In short all effort was made to prevent a reverting back to the old ways of living.

In these circumstances, and with such endeavours, it is not surprising that the period is marked by an absence of disturbances and offences.²⁴ On the contrary, there is every evidence of progress as borne out by the growth in income from Okhamandal by 38.8% during 1864-1869,²⁵ as a result of the growth of agricultural enterprise in the district.

The years 1875-1881 saw a continuation of the policy and measures for the rehabilitation of Waghers, with of course certain reservations. Since by this time the condition of Okhamandal, as also of its inhabitants the Waghers, had improved considerably, the state felt less obliged to extend the concessions to the degree it had earlier done. Land grants, therefore, were thence onwards restricted to a quantity that lay within the capacity of one family's management. Such restraint appears reasonable for the benefits of land grants could thereafter be spared for a wider section of the Wagher population enabling more in the community to benefit from it. It was also felt by dewan Sir T. Madhavrao that in future the grants of land be made conditional to service. The change in the outlook of the new administration lay in its policy of reducing the dependence on the state. Once the community had been pulled out of its poorly conditions, there was little justification for the continuation of the same kind of concessions being continued to the same people.

Even more significant for the Waghers, in these times, was the clearance of what appears a feudal vestige viz., the abolition of the customary attachment to the state of Wagher property in the absence of an heir. This change in property rights was revolutionary, as it was anywhere else. For the Wagher landholders, therefore, stakes were created which enjoined upon them the obedience to law and order.

The developments over these years, as also over the subsequent ones, show how the restlessness and turbulence among the Waghers emerged in conditions of economic setbacks. This is indicated by the Wagher disturbances in the time of the famine of 1877. It is also borne out by the degree in incidence of crimes during periods of such difficulties. Therefore, the increase in the total number of offences committed is by 105% during 1876-1879, the post famine years.²⁶ For the greatest number of robberies the maximum was

of 26%, again for the years 1878-79. Furthermore, of the various classes of offences as murders, homicide, dacoity and simple robbery committed, this last category constituted 98% of the total offences. Thus revealing the nature of the community.

In these years of famine,²⁷ the other complaints against the Waghers centred around their trespassing on others' fields for grazing their cattle. While the authorities appear to have been a little harsh on the Waghers in such cases as by passing the Cattle Trespass Act in 1879-80,²⁸ they did also help them to tide over their difficulties by opening relief works, granting *taccavi* advances, i.e. loans to agriculturists to meet the requirements of agriculture²⁹ and permitting them to go to Kathiawar to graze their cattle, as aforesaid. More land grants on favourable terms were also made to these people so that there was not a Wagher in the district who was not given rent free land of a *santi*, with only a customary *salami* of one rupee per annum.³⁰ This land was given to them in perpetuity, again, on conditions of proper conduct.

There are certain statistics that evidence the improvements made in the conditions of Waghers during 1875-1881. The first of these are the data relating to the extension of land under cultivation. During 1875-76 itself, the land held by Waghers on *salami* tenure shows an increase by 90%. In like manner is an increase seen of land held on full assessment. This increase is by 9% during 1875-76, and by 22% during 1876-1882.³¹ There is, besides, no relinquishment of land by Waghers reported. One could then legitimately attribute a portion of the increase in the land revenue receipts from 2.1% in 1875-76 to 46.4% in Okhamandal to the contribution of this small section in society.³²

The figures of growth of the percentage of land on full assessment are instructive. They lend credence to the fact that (a) the Waghers, by 1880, had got accustomed to the agricultural pursuits in which they had been channelised since the mid-nineteenth century (b) and that the benefits that had accrued to them from their rent free holdings enabled them to so stabilize their economic conditions as to welcome agricultural undertakings on full assessment. We may note in this connection that the Wagher *Khatedars*, i.e. landholders holding rent free land, constituted 72%; *khatedars* holding land on full assessment tenure viz., *bhogami* constituted 27% and the category of *khatedars* holding land on both accounts 0.2% of the total Wagher *Khatedar* population in the district.³³

This was the change from reliance to self-reliance. Apart from the significance that such a development had for the state by way of relieving the financial burden upon it viz., of maintaining a community, it was a notable one in the personality of a people. The percentage of 27% for the category of the landholders holding

land on full assessment represents the proportion of the self-reliant. The Waghers had surely come a long way in the path of progress.

The last two decades of the nineteenth century, from the time Sayajirao III assumed full charge of administration in 1881, witnessed the continuing trends of progress in the increasing adaptation of the community to peaceful and successful undertakings. The steady growth of land held by Waghers on both *salami* and non-*salami* tenure is sufficient proof thereof. The percentage increase in the former was by 14%,³⁴ and for the latter by 33%.³⁵ And whereas the pattern of increase of the former was consistent during the intervening years, that of the latter fluctuated in the same intervening years.

A special feature of these decades, which also mark a development in the policy formulation of the state generally, regarding all classes of cultivators, but particularly with regard to the Wagher cultivators, was the incentive for *bagayat* cultivation i.e. cultivation by irrigation.³⁶ The idea was to encourage sugarcane cultivation, for which the district had a natural facility. If the state was motivated by economic gains from this venture, since sugarcane was a remunerative crop and hence likely to benefit the revenues of the state, that the individual cultivators too would benefit was also a consideration.

The overall picture in Okhamandal for the period under discussion, then, is one of improvement and absence of disturbances. The state policy of enhancing the revenue demand by 39.1% in 1898, from what it had been in 1881,³⁷ points to the same. The figures of arrears written off and the remissions granted were also seen to taper off by the turn of the century.³⁸ It is fairly clear then that a weak section of the society in Okhamandal progressed on account of the attention from the state. In these circumstances they no longer required the aid that they had secured earlier, and hence the revision in assessment.

It is to be observed that the increase in the number of offences committed by Waghers during these two decades varied on the same pattern as seen earlier viz., a rise and fall in proportion to the economic difficulties created either by floods or lack of rain. The figures of offences committed reaching a maximum of 22%³⁹ in the approaching years of the famine of 1900, illustrates the point.

We may recall that the present study set out to investigate the changes in the Wagher community from a plundering people to settled *Khatedars*. We may also recall that such a change is stated to have belonged to the second half of the nineteenth century. And this was so because of the policies of land distribution in these decades. While the policy of curbing the piratical people goes back to the first decade of the nineteenth century,⁴⁰ that of reclaiming

them by positive measures such as land grants for cultivation belongs to the second half of the nineteenth century.

The transformation that the Waghers underwent was their acclimatization to the new economic mode of existence by the end of the century. The carefully outlined and implemented policy of providing the alternative economic opportunities, of facilitating the acquisitive orientation of the people by the low degree of appropriation fixed, and so furthering the profit motive or creating, as it were, the spirit of capitalism had achieved substantial change.

Economic considerations are said to have one very general kind of sociological importance for the organisation of groups or people or communities.⁴¹ If this be true, as indeed, the present study has revealed that an overwhelmingly strong set of economic interests can become bound up with the condition of a pattern of life and occupation of a people. This is so because every advantage that is appropriated tends to have the effect of stereotyping the existing form of social action.⁴² Our study of the Wagher community has shown how the advantage it appropriated from the economic opportunities provided, stereotyped its behaviour to a peaceful pattern of existence, and so effected a remarkable change in the character of the community during a span of fifty years.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Central Record Office (hereinafter C.R.O.), Baroda Memorandum on certain questions relating to Waghers and the Cognate tribes of Ikhamandal, 1901, Book No. 254, p. 2.
- 2 Gazetteer of the Baroda State, Vol. I, Bombay, 1923; Report on the Census of the Baroda Territories, 1881, file 6B, C 36B, p. 63.
- 3 Census Report, *op. cit.*, p. 190.
- 4 Gazetteer, *op. cit.*, p. 188.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 MSS, C.R.O., Baroda, Annual Report of Amreli Prant, 1977-78, Dafter No. 7, Pukka (Bundle), p. 3.
- 7 *Ibid.*
- 8 J. H. Gense, O. R. Banaji (ed.) : The Galkweds of Baroda and English Documents, Vol. VII, Bombay, p. 508.
- 9 *Ibid.*

- 10 J. H. Gense, O. R. Banaji, *op. cit.*, p. 603.
- 11 *Ibid.*
- 12 *Ibid.*
- 13 C.R.O., Baroda, Book No. 5556, Report of Elliot dated March 1884, and MSS, C.R.O., Baroda, Annual Report, 1865, *op. cit.*
- 14 V. K. Chavda, "Waghers of Okhamandal", Journal of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, 1958, p. 155.
- 15 *Ibid.*
- 16 Book No. 254, *op. cit.*, p. 2.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p. 63.
- 18 *Ibid.*
- 19 *Ibid.*, p. 64.
- 20 *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.
- 21 *Ibid.*, p. 67.
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 MSS, C.R.O., Baroda, Amreli Prant Chitnisi, Dafter No. 2, Ferisht 35/1, Letter from Wahiwaladar to Sar Suba, dated Ashad, 12, 1868.
- Ibid.* Various Letters : (a) Secretary to Resident, dated 17th March, 1862, p. 113; (b) Col. Wallace, 1862, p. 113; (c) Lt. William Scott, 1868, p. 114.
- MSS, C.R.O., Baroda, Sar Suba office, Jamabandi branch, Dafter No. 1, Pukka 1, Ferisht, 6, 1864 and Dafter No. 2, Ferisht 4, Pukka 1, 1869.
- Book 254, *op. cit.*
- C.R.O. Baroda, Administration Report, 1880-1881, File 316/4.
- MSS, C.R.O., Baroda, Administration Report of Amreli, 1879-80, File 316/5
- Ibid.*
- MSS, C.R.O., Baroda, Notes on administration of Okhamandal, Dafter Number 34, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-133.
- Ibid.*

- 32 MSS, C.R.O., Baroda, Daftar Number 34, *op.cit.*, pp. 66-67.
- 33 *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129
- 34 Daftar Number 34, *op.cit.*, pp. 206-207
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 MSS, C.R.O., Baroda, Amreli Prant Chitnisi, Daftar No. 16, File 9. Kazi's memorandum regarding tax on irrigated land in Okhamandal 1885-1886.
- 37 C.R.O., Baroda, Book No. 5308, pp. 5 & 6.
- 38 *Ibid.*, pp. 36-39.
- 39 Book No. 254, *op.cit.*, pp. 210-211.
- 40 J. H. Gense, D. R. Banaji, *op.cit.*, pp. 606-612.
41. Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, New York, 1964, p. 318.
- 42 *Ibid.*



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THE RAJ, RISLEY AND THE TRIBES AND CASTES OF BENGAL

Sekhar Bandyopadhyay

The rapid expansion of their empire in this country, forced upon the British the task of developing an administrative system capable of maintaining at least minimum law and order necessary to extract the social surplus in the form of revenue. This necessitated a clear knowledge of the composition of the society and the structure of the economy. As a result detailed enquiries were made, first into the system of land-tenure and the state of agriculture in Bengal. Soon, however, the colonial government, bewildered by the complexities of the Indian society, started sponsoring enquiries about all aspects of the Indian people. As early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Court of Directors held that the acquisition of systematic knowledge regarding the castes and occupations of the people "would be attended with much utility" and the subject was expressly mentioned in the instructions given to Dr. Francis Buchanan for his statistical survey of the country¹ - a project which he had started but never completed.

The traumatic experience of 1857 taught the British two important lessons. First, they should know more about the customs of the Indian people and respect them. For, it was, to a large extent, the social reforms of the earlier period, which had inadvertently hurt the religious susceptibilities of the natives and led to the great upsurge. And second, the high caste Hindus, who had supplied the largest number of the Indian sepoys, with their well-entrenched economic and political power, were the most important potential enemies of the Raj and, therefore, had to be counterbalanced by patronising the relatively backward communities. Hence there was more urgency to know the Indian society, and the tradition of official studies that had started with Buchanan's survey of Bengal and Behar, developed further through the decennial census reports and the publication of the Imperial and District Gazetteers. To this may be added the endeavours of the civilian-turned-ethnographers - a tradition that was started in the mid-nineteenth century by Dalton and Sherring, developed in the late nineteenth by Wise, Hunter and Risley and completed in the early twentieth century by O'Malley, Hutton and Blunt. In all these official enquiries caste had occupied a position of considerable importance or in fact the central position. And a lot of information was made available which developed the imperial corpus of knowledge about the various aspects of Indian society in general, and caste system in particular.

So much effort on the part of the government as well as individual administrators to collect sociological and anthropological data about the Indian people may lead one to "wonder what use knowledge of marriage customs or a cephalic index would be to an administrator";² It is also possible to hazard a conclusion that "the intellectual curiosity of some of the early officials is mostly responsible for the treatment of caste given to it in the census...."³ But motives less innocent are not difficult to be detected. These administrative — official studies on caste, it is true, reflected anthropological interest and theories of the period and part of the anthropometric data which were collected were definitely to satisfy purely academic interests. But the fact that all these studies in the second half of the nineteenth century, without a single exception, were being sponsored or aided by the government indicates a less academic motive as well. The government sponsored such studies, for it wanted to know, first of all the customs of the land so that it could face more prudently the vexed question of social reform; and secondly, it wanted to have a better knowledge about the internal divisions of the Indian society in order to identify its allies who could be played effectively against its enemies. The colonial ethnographers were also, as a result, looking at the Indian society through this administrative prism. To them caste was a distinct structural entity, concrete and measurable, with definable characteristics. They overlooked the important fact that all these units were tied to each other through inter-dependent relationship and thus constituted an organic whole. On the contrary, they represented the Hindu society as a motley collection of such distinctly separable social groups which could be quantified and classified for administrative purposes. In this multi-ethnic community, they detected a central polarity, with the privileged higher castes at the one end and the vast multitude of backward communities at the other. And this dichotomy was supposed to have a socio-economic as well as a racial dimension.

One of the important ethnographical researches on British India was perhaps Herbert H. Risley's *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*, published in 1891. And if we look into the background why Risley undertook this research and why the British government sponsored it, one thing becomes apparent. It was something more than pure scientific interest which motivated this monumental research. Both Risley and the government believed that such a study would bring out the internal contradictions of the Indian society. It would provide at the same time a detailed knowledge of the customs of the people and thus enable the colonial administrators to face more prudently the delicate question of social reform. An analysis of Risley's methodology and assumptions further confirms this intrinsic purpose of his research.

II

The initial efforts of the colonial government to collect ethnological data was confined to census operations. The enormous but haphazardly collected information of the 1872 census had, however, made the complex system of caste all the more confusing to the alien rulers. Hence to bring order out of chaos, more meticulous arrangements were made in 1881. "Caste Index" volumes were published for each province, giving details of the numerical strength of each caste in every village. Apart from this attempt at quantification, it was also intended that castes would be classified by their social position. But this sparked off a controversy. Petitions started pouring in, complaining of the position assigned to castes to which the petitioners belonged. And "the whole subject was shrouded in so much uncertainty and obscurity that the original arrangement was dropped".⁴

The Census Commissioner, Mr. Ploroden, therefore, suggested, a few months later, that some special measures should be taken to collect full information regarding castes and occupations throughout India. A special officer would be appointed to deal with castes, while the regular district agencies would collect information about occupations. The Government of India strongly recommended his proposal, the results of which they considered "would be of great value". A circular was issued to all the provincial governments to ponder over the feasibility of the scheme, the expenditure for which had to be met from the provincial funds. But it was the Bengal government alone which seems to have taken an active interest in the proposal. In October, the circular of the Government of India was sent to Mr. Bourdillon, the Deputy Superintendent of Census in Bengal, for early report. And in April, 1883, he submitted a memorandum on the subject, recommending that lists of castes and occupations should be prepared in his office at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 2,000, and that three special officers should be appointed for Bengal, Bihar and Chota Nagpur and Orissa.⁵ The Government of Bengal, however, decided to appoint one special officer for the whole of Bengal for a period of two years and Risley was selected for the post, for "the aptitude he had displayed for the literary and ethnological enquiries".⁶ On 6th January, 1884, his appointment was recommended to the Government of India and the proposal was sanctioned by them on the 28th January.⁷

For administrative reasons, Risley took charge of the appointment one year later, on 29th January, 1885. And then after collecting a mass of information in Behar and consulting D.C.J. Ibbetson and J.C. Nesfield at a conference in Lahore, he submitted a detailed scheme of collecting "fresh data in a systematic form" through the agency of district officers as well as informed and enthusiastic private individuals. It was designed on the one hand, "to elicit the

salient characteristics of several castes" and at the same time, to prepare a detailed account of the "caste customs". The scheme was approved by the Government Resolution, dated 30th April, 1885, which reviewed the whole question and provided the machinery for its execution within a reasonable time.⁸

What Risley initially proposed to do was to conduct an "ethnographic enquiry into the customs of all castes and tribes in Bengal" which either formed "a substantial proportion of the population of any district, or, though numerically insignificant, ... [were] specially interesting from the scientific point of view".⁹ He selected about 165 local correspondents, both official and non-official, in different districts. The list included the names of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in Howrah and Aswini Kumar Datta in Bakargunge.¹⁰ They were asked not merely to submit memorandums on all the castes and tribes found in their own districts but also to arrange them "in order of social precedence", as it occurred in that particular region.¹¹ All these reports would then form the basis of an 'Ethnographic Glossary', containing all the necessary information about most of the important tribes and castes of Bengal, their customs, occupational status and social rank, both general and regional. The task left unfinished by the census authorities in 1881 was thus taken up by Risley with great enthusiasm.

But during these years, another important idea was also taking shape in the mind of Herbert Risley. Sir Alfred Lyall, a few years before, had spoken of "the gradual Brahmanisation of the aboriginal non-Aryan, or casteless tribes". Risley believed that this was a continuous process and was still "progressing on a large scale". A whole tribe, or sometimes a section of it, became gradually converted to Hinduism, without even abandoning their tribal designation. The tribe would thus become a caste and would go on stripping itself of all customs likely to betray its true descent. In such a situation, the physical characteristics of its numbers would alone survive. Risley was already facing much difficulty in throwing light upon the true origin of the lower and the intermediate castes by collating their customs and ceremonies, which, in most cases, they had liberally borrowed from the higher castes. Hence, around June, 1885, he began to think about "the possibility of applying to the leading castes and tribes of Bengal, the methods of recording and comparing typical physical characteristics which have yielded valuable results in other parts of the world".¹² Immediately, he wrote to Francis Galton, an ex-President of the London Anthropological Institute and W. H. Flower, the then Director of the Natural History Department in the British Museum, asking for their suggestions. In August, Flower wrote back, expressing his full agreement with Risley. "Language, customs, &c.", he wrote, "may help or give

indications, but they are often misleading. Therefore, the physical examination which you propose to make of the tribes of the Indian Empire will be most important."¹³

Flower had also advised Risley to look into the works of Dr. Paul Topinard, then a Professor of the School of Anthropology and the Secretary to the Anthropological Society of Paris. His famous book *Elements d'Anthropologie Generale* was published early in 1885 and in September that year, it reached Risley. After a careful reading, he was convinced that the author's instructions for dealing with living subjects were applicable to Indian conditions. Immediately, he wrote to Paris for Dr. Topinard's "anthropometric box" containing "four simple instruments". In late February, 1886, he received the box and made some experiments on the Rajbansis of Rangpur. The results showed that there was "no practical difficulty in carrying out Dr. Topinard's suggestions for measurement on a large scale at a very moderate cost, and that the experiment.... [was] likely to yield valuable result."¹⁴

In March, 1886, Risley, therefore, submitted to the Government of Bengal, a proposal to supplement the enquiries by an examination of the physical characteristics of selected castes and tribes.¹⁵ The proposal was immediately sanctioned for Bengal.¹⁶ Later on, with the approval of the Government of India, it was extended to the North-Western Provinces, Punjab and the Central Provinces, to provide a comparative dimension to Risley's experiments.¹⁷ In July, 1887, the Secretary of State, "considering the probable value of the result of the enquiries being conducted by Mr. Risley", approved of the prolongation of his appointment upto 31st March, 1888, within which the enquiry had to be completed.¹⁸

Risley had thus developed two distinct lines of enquiry. They were, as he himself described them, an "ethnographic enquiry" into the customs and an "ethnological enquiry" into the physical characters of the tribes and castes of Bengal.¹⁹ The whole scheme was later on sent to some leading anthropologists and Indologists in Europe, like Mr. Francis Galton, Sir John Lubbock, Professor Max Muller, Professor Topinard and Sir Henry Maine. All of them agreed that the enquiry was being conducted on approved scientific methods and it was likely to yield valuable results.²⁰ But the question is, why Risley had planned such an elaborate and intensive investigation. And above all, why the government sponsored it?

In his memorandum, Risley stated the objectives in unequivocal terms. First of all, the results of the enquiry "shall be useful, directly or indirectly, for the purposes of practical administration." And then, after "these official conditions" were complied with, it was "further desirable that the operations should be carried on in a manner likely to yield results of some scientific value".²¹ Administrative necessity, therefore, seems to have been his first priority. But how such an enquiry was going to help the administration?

First of all, the proposed 'ethnographical enquiry' would identify and classify the different social groups that constituted the Indian society. The "native society", Risley observed, "is made up of a network of sub-divisions governed by rules which affect every department of life, and that in Bengal at any rate, next to nothing is known about the system upon which the whole native population regulates its domestic and social relations".²² For any legislation or executive action or more particularly, for the development of representative institutions, such knowledge was more than essential. Hence, "nothing can be useless", he concluded, "which enables us to understand the working of an institution which exists nowhere else in the world, and which supplies the chief motive power of the society we have to govern. How that society will behave under novel conditions, what use, for example, it will make of any particular form of political representation, is, it seems to me, a question which cannot be answered without a fairly minute knowledge of the internal organisation of the society itself".²³ In other words, ethnic composition had to be taken into consideration in order to secure proper representation of the different segments of the society in the representative bodies, so that no particular group could monopolise political power. And this ethnicity had an economic connotation as well; for, caste, as Risley supposed, was often "an index of wealth". Hence an ethnographic glossary would not merely ensure an equitable distribution of patronage, but would also facilitate "the assessment of any direct tax".²⁴

Another purpose of the 'Ethnographic Glossary' was to inform the government officers of the local customs, so that they could handle better the more concrete day-to-day administrative problems. Wherever, "distress arises and relief measures become necessary", Risley observed, "the Glossary will tell the district officer what is the characteristic occupation of each caste in the distressed area, what is their social status, and from whose hands they can take cooked food or sweetmeats respectively, without losing caste. To our ignorance of these peculiarities is due the loss of life which so often results from the reluctance of people to come to relief camps where they think their notions of purity of diet are likely to be disregarded, or their caste endangered by work which to them is degrading".²⁵ As an example, he cited the case of the Chhattar-Khais of Orissa, a caste composed of people who had lost their caste by eating food prepared at the relief Kitchen during the great Orissa famine in 1866. A government measure had thus inadvertently put these people in much social misery. Similar things might also happen if the government, without knowing the customs of the particular groups of people, had tried to exert its influence for discouraging infant marriage or promoting the remarriage of widows. Hence, Risley's cautious suggestion was, "the more Government officers know about the religious and social customs of the people of their districts, the better able they will be to deal either with the possible social problems of the future, or with the practical

questions referred to above".²⁶ Moreover, in both civil and criminal proceedings, questions of caste usage were continually coming up, particularly in connection with marriage, abduction, adultery, etc. As these matters fell within the realm of 'personal law', the custom of the caste involved determined the law to be applied. "In cases of this kind", Risley noted, "an officer who knows what the custom of the caste is must clearly be in a better position to deal with it".²⁷ An 'Ethnographic Glossary', therefore, was urgently needed.

The Government might not have shared the scientific interests of Risley, but it could hardly ignore the "substantial administrative benefits" of the proposed enquiry. "It has always been the policy of Government", it observed in a Resolution, "to encourage researches which tend to throw light upon the actual life of the general mass of the population, which even now is not adequately represented either by the vernacular newspapers, or by any of the various public bodies and associations". As early as the beginning of the 19th century, the Court of Directors had taken initiative for "the acquisition of systematic knowledge regarding the castes and occupations of the people", when they instructed Dr. Francis Buchanan to conduct a survey of the country. "The enquiry then abandoned may now", the government thought, "be resumed with greater prospect of success. The census of 1881 has provided a sound statistical basis for further research, while recent events have served to bring to prominent notice the necessity for more minute knowledge on the part of Government officers of the actual usages and beliefs of the people at large". An ethnographic enquiry of the people was, therefore, "as desirable as a cadastal survey of the land". For, "social reforms are beginning to be discussed by the leaders of the native society, and a time may come when Government will be invited to exercise its influence in such matters".²⁸ The Resolution, mentioned above, which approved Risley's scheme of enquiry, therefore, reveals two expectations of the government. First of all, it was searching for a depressed underclass, ignored by the vernacular press and left out by the public bodies, vis-a-vis, the more privileged sections, 'the leaders of the native society'. And secondly, it wanted to have 'a more minute knowledge' of the Indian society in order to face the sensitive question of social reform without hurting the sentiments of the masses, or 'the people at large'. The supposed polarity in the Indian society, with small sections of privileged upper castes at the top and the vast body of depressed lower castes at the bottom, had thus taken shape in the perception of the Raj. And this dichotomy was not merely social or economic, but had "a racial dimension too, which Risley was trying to find out through the second part of his enquiry, i.e. through ethnological survey.

Risley, while explaining the purposes of his enquiry, had observed that the "ethnological branch of the work will be of little or no use for administrative purposes, and will in fact interest only a small number of persons in India and Europe".²⁹ But his assumptions and methodology betrayed other purposes as well. Risley

had borrowed from Alfred Lyall the idea of a bi-racial composition of the Hindu society, the higher castes belonging to the Aryan stock, and the lower castes being the non-Aryan autochthons of the land. The anthropometric methods, he believed, would "detach considerable masses of non-Aryans from the general body of Hindus".³⁰ Max Muller also largely concurred with these notions. In his letter to Risley, he wrote:

*"In India we have first of all the two principal ingredients of the population - the dark aboriginal inhabitants and their more fair-skinned conquerors. Besides these two, there have been enormous floods of neighbouring races all mingling more or less freely, with the original inhabitants and among themselves. Hence, therefore, the ethnologist has a splendid opportunity of discovering some tests by which even after a neighbourly intercourse lasting for thousands of years, the descendants of one race may be told from the descendants of others".*³¹

Risley, therefore, went for anthropometric measurement in order to classify the different castes of Bengal into two broad categories, according to their racial origin, explicit in their physical characteristics. His anthropometric instructions to the enumerators reveal this objective adequately. "In measuring the higher castes", he asked his enumerators, "to reject persons of very black complexion and with very broad and depressed noses, as in such cases there is at least a suspicion of the intermixture of low caste blood. Similarly among the lower castes, men of very fair complexion and high caste type of feature should be rejected".³² And the results of the enquiry, he believed, would be of much "political value", as they would demonstrate the ethnic composition of the population to be governed.³³

The other anthropologists and Indologists who had received copies of the scheme also agreed with Risley about the importance of the enquiry for the purposes of administration. Sir John Lubbock, for example, wrote in his letter to Risley:

"There can be no question, I think, that the information you are collecting would be of great interest and value, both scientifically and also in the interest of good government.

*Our ignorance, for instance, of the laws relating to land has led us into much trouble on various occasions".*³⁴

Max Muller was, perhaps, far more eloquent on the subject:

"..... Both from a practical and scientific point of view, the inquiries which, with the sanction of the Indian Government, you have set on foot will, I have no doubt, be productive of most valuable results. They will enable the statesman to understand more

*thoroughly many of the traditional beliefs, local customs and deep-rooted prejudices of those whom he has to influence and control....."*³⁵

After years of relentless labour, Risley completed the four volumes of his book, *The Tribes and Castes of Bengal*. The first two volumes, which came out in print in 1891, contained the Ethnographic Glossary, while the next two dealt with anthropometric data. A formal trend was thus set in, which developed further during the next three decades and contributed to the framing of the colonial policy on caste.

III

Information is an essential tool of social control. And it is all the more necessary for an alien ruler. In order to rule effectively, the government must know properly, the customs, beliefs and the attitudes of the people, as well as, the inner divisions of the subject society, both vertical and horizontal. In British India, the vertical social divisions were brought out through cadastral surveys, while the horizontal divisions were being determined through census enumerations and ethnographic researches. The theory of a fundamental dichotomy within the Indian society, between the privileged high castes on the one hand and the backward classes on the other, had been impressed on the minds of the colonial policy-planners. Ethnographers like Risley had classified and quantified such social groups, so that the government could now easily locate them and identify them for administrative purposes. In the days of political turmoil, it was not unnatural for them to jump on to the conclusion that men of the higher castes, with their entrenched social, economic as well as political interests, were the real adversaries of the Raj and the principal participants in the nationalist movements. Therefore, in order to dilute the intensity of the anti-imperialist agitation, they sought to encourage political separatism among the so-called 'backward classes', as it had already been done in the case of the Muslims. It is, however, also true, that even before such measures were taken, the lower castes, particularly the untouchables, could not fully identify themselves, socially or culturally, with the high caste Hindus. But what was once a conflict of socio-cultural identity was now transformed into a conflict of interests. And it was the colonial ethnographers who provided the theoretical foundation as well as the information necessary to formulate a policy on social reform and more particularly of protective discrimination which ultimately was designed to popularize the need for a continued British connection with India among the vast multitudes of depressed classes - a category discovered, defined and quantified by the ethnographers themselves.

FOOTNOTES

1. Resolution, Government of Bengal, Financial Department, dated Darjeeling, the 30th April, 1885, Proceedings of the Government of Bengal, Financial Department, Miscellaneous Branch, [hereinafter *Financial (Misc.)*] (West Bengal State Archives, Calcutta), March 1887, p. 36.
2. B. S. Cohn, 'Notes on the Study of Indian Society and Culture', in Milton Singer and B. S. Cohn, eds., *Structure and Change in Indian Society*, (Chicago, 1968), p. 17.
3. G. S. Ghurye, *Caste and Class in India*, (Bombay, 1957), p. 193.
4. Report on the Census of British India, 17th February, 1881, Vol. I, p. 277.
5. 'Ethnographic Enquiries in Bengal', by H. H. Risley, [hereinafter *Ethnographic Enquiries*], dated Darjeeling, the 22nd December, 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, Colln. 1-49, p. 27.
6. From R. H. Wilson, Offcg. Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Financial Dept., to the Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Dept., No. 1081 T-F dated Darjeeling, the 5th July 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, Colln. 1-7, p. 3.
7. *Ethnographic Enquiries*, p. 27.
8. *Ibid.* Also Risley, *op.cit.*, Vol. II, Appendix II, pp. 143-144.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
10. 'List of Correspondents', *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, pp. 145-147.
11. Circular No. D, from H. H. Risley, dated Calcutta, the - July 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, p. 105.
12. 'On the Application of Dr. Topinard's Anthropometric System To The Tribes And Castes of Bengal', by H. H. Risley, dated Rungpore, the 8th March, 1886, [hereinafter *Application of Anthropometric System*], *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, pp. 83-85.
13. From W. H. Flower, F. R. S., Director, British Museum, Natural History Dept., Cromwell Road, London, to H. H. Risley, on Special Duty, dated Horn Church, Essex, the 8th August, 1885, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, p. 96.
14. *Application of Anthropometric System*, p. 85.
15. From H. H. Risley, on Special Duty, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Financial Dept., No. 51, dated Rungpore, the 8th March, 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, p. 81.

16. From E. N. Baker, Under Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Financial Dept., to H. H. Risley, No. 1033, dated Calcutta, the 22nd March, 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, Colln. 1-3, p. 1.
17. From A. P. Mac Donnell, Offcg. Secretary to the Government of India, Home Dept., to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Financial Dept., No. 870, dated Simla, the 21st June, 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, Colln. 1-5, p. 2.
18. From Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to the Government of India, No. 73, dated India Office, London, the 21st July, 1887, *Financial (Misc.)*, October 1887, Colln. 1-95-96, p. 3.
19. *Ethnographic Enquiries*, p. 28.
20. From H. H. Risley to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal, Financial Dept., No. 655, dated Darjeeling, the 5th October, 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, Colln. 1-33-34, p. 15.
21. *Ethnographic Enquiries*, p. 28. Emphasis added.
22. H. H. Risley, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. vii. Emphasis added.
23. *Ethnographic Enquiries*, p. 30.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
25. *Ibid.*
26. H. H. Risley, *op.cit.*, Vol. I, p. ix.
27. *Ethnographic Enquiries*, p. 31.
28. Resolution, Government of Bengal, Financial Department, dated Darjeeling, the 30th April, 1885, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, p. 36.
29. *Ethnographic Enquiries*, p. 31.
30. *Application of Anthropometric System*, p. 85.
31. From Max Muller to H. H. Risley, dated Oxford, the 20th July, 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, Colln. 1-33-34, pp. 16-17.
32. Memo by H. H. Risley, No. 656, dated Darjeeling, the 5th October, 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, Colln. 1-32, p. 11.
33. *Application of Anthropometric System*, p. 85. Emphasis added.

34. From Sir John Lubbock, F. R. S., to H. H. Risley, dated 15 Lombard Street, E-C, the 14th July, 1886. *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, Colln. 1-33-34, p. 15.
35. From Max Muller to H. H. Risley, dated Oxford, the 20th July, 1886, *Financial (Misc.)*, March 1887, Colln. 1-33-34, p. 16.



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THE INAM TENURES OF SOUTH INDIA SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE BRITISH INAM POLICY DURING THE 19TH CENTURY*

D. Subramanyam Reddy

An Inam means a gift or benefaction conferred by a superior to an inferior person or institution. In India and especially in the South the term was applied to the grant made by the state (either originally or taking up a grant made by a village community) of the permanent (and hereditary) right in one case to occupy land without paying rent to the state and in another case to collect Government assessment on land.¹ Thus the Inams were of two kinds: Those grants made by rulers and those coming out of village resources. The former were called Sanadi-inams and the latter as gramma-inams or manyams. The tenure though originally rent-free came in time in many cases to be qualified by the reservation of a portion of the assessable revenue or by the exaction of all proceeds exceeding the intended value of the original assignment. Such charge was called *jodi*, that is to say favourable "rent" or quit rent.² Inam might be for a field only, or for a village or for a number of villages or for a tract. When a grant was made of a whole village, it was known as *dehaut* and was technically called a major Inam; when only some lands in a village were granted, it was known as a minor Inam; when a large block of land was granted less than a village, but much larger than an ordinary Inam, it was called a *khandriga* or *pohal shrotriyam*, which ranks as a minor Inam; when a village already under cultivation was granted, it was known as a *mouje* village; and when a hamlet had been built but which was not recorded in the revenue accounts separately from the village within the limits of which it was situated, it was known as *gramagarbha kandriga*.³ These grants were divided into two classes according to the date of their creation: Tarapadi Inam and Sanad or Dumbala Inam. A tarapadi Inam was one granted at the original formation of a village for village purposes, comprising grama manyams, the Inam enjoyed by the village revenue, police and private servants and the village temple, and having its authority in the village register, or one inherited or held from an uncertain

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period as an independent right.⁴ It might have been granted either by the king or the village community, probably by the latter. This term was used in contradistinction to the Sanad or Dumbala Inam, which was held under a specific grant from the ruling power, either by individuals, or by religious or charitable institutions.⁵

Inams in one form or another were both status symbols and substance of entrenched privilege and power for every important institution or elite group of the country. The heads of villages, castes, cults or anything else could hold inams. Servants of any status, whether of villages or of rulers, of mercantile or of military institutions, could hold inams. Inam may be described as representing the accumulated status, power, privilege and "charity" of the country from most remote times and to have been successively legitimized by chiefs and sovereigns beyond number and without interruption.⁷ It played an important role in the internal economy in determining the socio-economic superiority and in the distribution of economic power in a South Indian village.⁸ It also served as a device to help meet the demand on the overassessed land (in places like Ceded Districts and Chittoor pollams). This was the reason why Inams were extensive where revenue pressure was severe and where conditions made possible the enlargement of inams through grants.⁸ We find this in South India in the dry crop areas of Ceded and Chittoor district rather than in North India which felt the full weight of the Muslim rule for a long time.¹⁰ A measure of the significance of Inams is seen in how extensive they were and how large was their proportion to the whole of state revenues. In 1869 they amounted to over six million acres and their assessed value came to nearly a crore. There were 367,427 separate holdings, 346,473 of them in the private hands of individuals, families. Inams amounted in value roughly to about one-tenth of all Government land revenue in the Madras Presidency.

Preservation of such pre-requisites for the privileged elites of the South serves perhaps to explain how the authority of rulers like the British became so firmly established. Lessons from the Revolt of Chittoor "Pollams" (1803-05) and the Cuddapah Rebellion in 1846¹¹ showed what might result from tampering with inams. Each successive power, whether Hindu or Muslim and whether grandly imperial or locally petty recognizing the hard realities of local influence and seeking to gain local support in order to stabilise or legitimize its own particular authority was prone to recognize existing realities and, indeed, to augment the number of grants. Grants were important for patronage, a means by which a ruler could seek to keep and to gain social and political support.¹² That is why the British, mainly during the administration of Munro, made political settlements with the important leaders and lords of villages and as a result of if they could also raise irregular military forces from out of the village warrior elites.¹² It was due to its importance in stabilizing the power of a ruler that even the Company followed a "deliberate and tacit" policy for a long time to keep

its hands off the Inams and, by and large, to leave Inams alone, as it was delicate matter to touch.³

The existence or origin of beneficial tenures known originally by the Sanskrit name, manyams, and latterly by the Arabic term, inams after the Mohammadan conquest, can be traced to a very remote antiquity in South India. The gift of land was extolled by Hindu Shastras as the most meritorious of charities, and every Hindu Sovereign was, therefore, ambitious of distinguishing his reign by the extent and value of the lands he alienated in Inam to the religious classes of the community. Inam grants were generally made by them in the most solemn and impressive manner. They were engraved on copperplates or slabs of stone and were declared to be irrevocable "so long as the sun and moon endure"; a heavy curse was invoked on those who disturbed the tenure, while great merit was ascribed to those who maintained and confirmed it.¹⁴ The grants made by the Hindu Sovereigns of Pallava, Pandya and Chola dynasties from their dynastic seats at Kanchipuram, Madurai and Tanjore, the Maratta princes who ruled from Tanjore, and the chieftains of Orissa and the Reddies who for centuries held sway over the greater part of the Northern Circars were of this religious nature.

During the period of anarchy which followed the overthrow of Native dynasties and which continued though in a less degree after the establishment of the Muslim rule in South India, the power of granting Inams was assumed by various petty chiefs, officers of Government, and others, who alienated the revenues to a considerable extent. Numerous minor Inams of this discretion were granted by the Zamindars, by the various Faujdars and even by renters in the Northern Circars; while the Palegars of the Ceded Districts, Chittoor Pollams, Western Pollams and the southern provinces of the Presidency were even more liberal.¹⁵

Though it was not the principle of the Muslim rulers to regard alienations of revenue as permanent and binding, their policy with regard to Inam tenures was practically lenient. They generally respected the more ancient grants held by Brahmans and temples. They also made liberal fresh grants not only to their own immediate relatives and followers, the higher ranks of their Civil and Military Officers and the religious classes of their own faith, but also to the Hindus and their religious institutions. Thus the effect of the Muslim rule was to add greatly to the already existing large extent of land exempt from the payment of revenue.¹⁶

Another period of political confusion ensued during the latter part of the 18th century when the supremacy in Southern India was contested between the British, the French and the various local powers, and which did not subside until the different grants and treaties between the years 1750 and 1801 brought into the possession of the East India Company the vast extent of territory

forming the Madras Presidency. There is good reason to suppose that a large extent of land was granted as Inam during this period by parties who had not even the shadow of authority to make such alienation.¹⁷ By the beginning of the 19th century long period of disturbed political conditions and unstable central authority had swelled Inam to an unnatural extent.¹⁸

During the early British rule, the Government of the day, following the custom of the country, adopted the practice of rewarding meritorious services by grants of Jagirs, and thus many villages were alienated either in perpetuity or for a stated number of lives. This practice however gradually fell into disuse after the receipt of the Despatches from the Court of Directors dated respectively, 2nd January 1822 and 27th May, 1829, in which they expressed their opinion of the superior propriety of money pensions to grants of land on all ordinary occasions, and directed that grants of land should be restricted to special cases.¹⁹ It was also not unusual for the earlier Collectors to grant Inams of their own authority for various purposes, but the extent of land so alienated was comparatively trifling.

The importance of instituting an inquiry into the titles of Inam tenures was recognised at a very early date of the British administration. Rough revenue surveys were made in all the districts of the Presidency except in the Northern Circars, which were for the most part held by Zamindars, and on these occasions every village and field held exempt from the payment of revenue was carefully recorded. At that stage, however, the policy of those to whom the administration of the country was entrusted did not admit of a general scrutiny into the rights of Inam holders. Now and then partial investigations into such tenures were instituted in limited tracts, and such as were held on no valid title or for services not required were fully or partly assessed. But the general result was that exempted lands were not interfered with during the earlier surveys.²⁰

A Regulation²¹ was passed about this time the object of which was to try the validity of the titles of persons holding, or claiming to hold, lands exempted from the payment of revenue under grants not being Badshahi or royal grants. Although under the provisions of this law proclamations were issued throughout the Zillahs, very few of the Inamdars responded to the call, and consequently the Registers of Inams prepared were neither completed nor perfect. Very few, if indeed any, suits were instituted by Collectors for the recovery of exempted lands.

In 1825 orders were again issued for the investigation of all Inam tenure and a special establishment was sanctioned for that purpose in Bellary, but these measures led to no result. By regulation IV of 1831, afterwards extended by Acts XXXI of 1836 and XXXIII of 1838, the Courts of Adalat were prohibited from

taking cognizance of claim to personal or hereditary grants of money or of land revenue, whether conferred by the British Government or made by Native Governments and confirmed or continued by the British Government, except with the special permission of Government. The power to decide on such claims was declared to be reserved exclusively to the Governor in Council after due investigation by such persons and in such manner as he should deem fit.²² In like manner Regulation VI of 1831 removed all claims to the possession of, or succession to, hereditary offices in the revenue or police departments, or to the enjoyment of the emoluments annexed thereto, from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts of Judicature, and provided that they should be adjudicable exclusively by the Collectors and the Board of Revenue subject to the revision of Government.²³ The objects of these Regulations were to prevent Inams from being diverted from the purposes for which they were granted, and to secure to Government its reversionary rights in cases of lapse. Notwithstanding these legislative measures, neither the transfers nor lapses of Inam property were subjected to scrutiny as they occurred. Inams were permitted to be sold and purchased without question. In a great many instances the Civil Courts freely admitted and adjudicated upon claims to Inams as if the prohibitory Regulations had no existence, and in some cases Inam property was received as security by Revenue officers and sold in satisfaction of Government claims.²⁴ In fact no active measures were taken to vindicate the law or to assess the rights of Government until 1845 when the Government issued an order²⁵ strictly prohibiting local officers from continuing Inams on the occurrence of lapses, and directing that each case should be reported for their orders through the Board of Revenue. This was followed in the next year by a proclamation²⁶ notifying the adoptions involving inheritance to Inam lands should not be recognised unless reported at least six months before the death of the party making the adoption. The views held by Government at this time on the question of dealing with inams were as follows:

"In reviewing the grounds on which this recommendation was founded, we recorded our opinion that as a general rule, alienations of lands originally granted for charitable purposes should not be suffered to descend perpetuity either by relationship by blood, or by deed of gift or sale, and that these did not appear sufficient reason, because the right to these grants was not here to fore questioned, that they should be considered to 'have always been treated hereditary'. We considered it objectionable in principle that a portion of the land revenue should be permanently set apart for the maintenance of a class of persons who had no legitimate claim on the State to support from it and thus hold out inducement to idleness and fraud, and continual pauperism". "We therefore deemed it desirable, to fix some limit to the enjoyment of such grants, and as we were unwilling to cause distress by the sudden resumption of the lands we resolved to continue them to the present claimants to be enjoyed on Inam tenure only during their respective lives."²⁷

While such was the prevailing opinion of Government on the subject, an event occurred in the Cuddapah District, which, although in itself insignificant in its political bearing and in reality but little connected with the course of treatment the latter pursued towards Inams generally, led to a discussion regarding the policy of disturbing long-existing rights of property in Inam lands; and the Court of Directors, adopting the views of the Special Commissioner, Mr. Inglis, as to the proximate cause of the insurrection of Narasimha Reddi, came to the conclusion that it was to be ascribed to a course of measures in violation at once of the stipulated and prescriptive rights of property in the District.²⁸ They proceeded further to observe that "Whatever may be the result of the further inquiry which you have instituted, we deem it essentially necessary that it should be placed beyond doubt that wherever such rights actually exist they will be respected by the officers of Government, and that all apprehensions in the minds of the people on that head should be effectually removed. In dealing with questions connected with the right to property, it ought to be borne in mind that long undisturbed possession not only affords evidence of the existence of the right but moreover, with respect to landed property and to tenures affecting whole classes of persons, creates, on considerations equally of policy and justice, a powerful motive with Government for not wishing the possession to be disturbed. The arbitrary resumption of tenures and the ill-advised transfer of landed property in India, whether effected by the Courts of Law or by the Officers of Government, are almost invariably followed by disaffection and disorder. The Government have it in their power to prevent such a result when, as in the present case, the only claims in opposition to long continued possession are their own."²⁹ The principles enunciated in this Despatch were by another Despatch in the following year declared to be applicable in dealing with Inams throughout the Presidency.³⁰

Acting under the spirit of the principles inculcated by the Court of Directors, the Government issued a series of instructions,³¹ which gave considerable latitude to Collectors to continue Inams in all ordinary cases, but required a report to the Board of Revenue and ultimately to the Government in those cases where the Inam had passed out of the original family, or had been fraudulently obtained or irregularly inherited where it was claimed on invalid grounds, as through the female line, or by a collateral branch, in virtue of an illegal or suspicious adoption or generally where there were any circumstances affecting the prior transmission of Inams on the occurrence of lapses, which was a source of great distress, was prohibited. A notification³² was also published prohibiting the alienation of Inams held without Sanad, and warning all parties against purchasing or lending money on the security of such Inams.

The general effect of these rules (notwithstanding considerable modifications in subsequent years regarding inheritance through the female line) was to bring a vast number of cases under inquiry, and from the impossibility of their being promptly attended to by the Revenue authorities conjointly with their more pressing duties, to keep in suspense a large body of Inamdars. The discontent and alarm thus produced among the Inamdars manifested themselves in numerous petitions, and the reports of the Collectors of that day abound with their apprehensions of the evil affects of such a state of things and of the hopelessness of satisfactorily performing the daily increasing work in connection with the inquiry into lapsed Inams.³³ The unsatisfactory state in which the Inam question then stood was as follows: "How far it may be expedient now to carry into effect the intention so long entertained of a general investigation of the Enam tenures in the Ceded Districts is a question of policy upon which it is advisable to come to a determined resolution speedily, for it is undeniable that to keep it suspended with the dreaded scrutiny always imminent is most likely to cause discontent and inquietude in the large body interested who have so great a stake at risk. There is nothing more irritating than such a feeling of insecurity which must attach in a measure to those who have good titles as well as to those who are aware of defects."³⁴ Though the evils and difficulties which beset the question rapidly increased after the rules of 1848 had been promulgated and had begun to be acted upon throughout the Presidency, no general measures of a remedial character were adopted for some years, notwithstanding that their necessity was acknowledged and became every year more pressing.³⁵

In communicating their orders on the case of a lapsed Inam in the District of Bellary, the Court of Directors made certain observations of a general character which certainly indicated that their views on the Inam question had undergone a material change since their Judicial Despatch of 1847. They said: "We are disposed to deal liberally and considerately with them (the Enamdars), but we must reiterate an opinion we lately expressed to the Government of Bengal that it is only justice to those who contribute to the expenses of Government that immunities and privileges resting on no foundation of right should be gradually and considerately eradicated". They further stated that "the rules framed for the guidance of the Bombay Enam Commission as detailed in Act XI of 1852 appear to us to be as liberal and indulgent to the Enamdars as is compatible with justice to the other interests involved in these questions, and we think it desirable that the provisions of that Act should form the basis of your future decisions of Enam questions". They concluded this Despatch with suggesting, among other things, "that it should be made incumbent on the supposed heirs of such (lapsed) Enams themselves to bring the case before Government on the death of an Enamdar, and that failure to comply with this condition should by itself be considered a sufficient ground for immediate and unconditional resumption in the event of the

case subsequently coming to the knowledge of the officers of Government."³⁶

The question of a general survey and revision of the assessment throughout the Presidency engaged the attention of the Government about this period, and after briefly reviewing the highly unsatisfactory state of the Inam question, they came to the conclusion that "the general survey will be the fit time for investigating the tenures of rent free lands; and that if it is undertaken in a fair spirit and with proper consideration for the presumptive interest which has grown out of a permissive enjoyment of above half a century, it will not be objected to."³⁷ The Government also considered that the proposed inquiry would be one source from which to replace the immediate loss of revenue by the proposed measures, but it was of the opinion that "after the long possession which has been tacitly permitted it would be only fair to deal liberally with these cases and to forbear to resume immediately; that the proceedings should be rather of the nature of those at Bombay under Act XI of 1852. Thus the immediate recovery of revenue from this source would not be great but ultimately it would be very considerable."³⁸ It was also proposed that the investigations should be conducted by a special agency as in Bombay. These sentiments and propositions finally received the assent of the Court of Directors.³⁹

At this time the Board of Revenue reported⁴⁰ on a question that had been referred for its opinion, viz, the expediency of abstaining from all further interference in regard to Inams not exceeding two cawnies in extent. It considered that it would be a serious error to abandon the rights of Government in such Inams at the very time when the contemplated Revenue Survey would afford an opportunity of fully and fairly investigating and deciding on them.⁴¹ It also concurred in the necessity of the appointment of Commissioners to examine the titles on which all Inam lands were held.⁴²

The Government in an elaborate and comprehensive review of the whole question was of opinion that the subject of Inams called for immediate attention; that the inquiry should be conducted by a special agency; that a new law was necessary to give the investigating officers the requisite powers; and that the rules prescribed by Act XI of 1852 for Inams held without grant in the Presidency of Bombay were extremely liberal but were inapplicable to the circumstances of the Madras Presidency; and that all Inams not emanating from the Sovereign rulers meant extinction of these tenures, the existence of which was considered injurious to the payers of revenue generally. It was further observed that the case of Inams held without grant had become somewhat complicated by the orders of the Court of Directors conveyed in their judicial Despatch dated 13th October, 1847, No.19 declaring that long

undisturbed possession both afforded evidence of right and constituted a motive to Government not to interfere.⁴³ The Government argued that the latter part of this proposition was matter of opinion, while the former was certainly opposed not only to the subsequent views of the Court of Directors but to the Regulation⁴⁴ Law of the Presidency which expressly provided that possession for any length of time should be no good plea against the resumption of an Inam. A reconsideration of these orders was therefore requested. Sanction was also solicited to the appointment of a Commissioner under the proposed Act and the subject was again and again urged⁴⁵ upon the attention of the Court in the following year in connection with the survey operations.

The Court of Directors in passing orders on several propositions of the Madras Government observed that in very few cases the original grantee would be alive and in most of the estates there would be only the third generation, and that it could not be supposed that the possessor would acknowledge the justice of resuming inherited rights which he had looked upon as a future inheritance for his children.⁴⁶ They added that in the settlement of this question "something more than strict right" was to be taken into account, and they therefore adhered to their instructions of 1847 and relaxed the stringency of their remarks in the Despatch of 27th September 1854 as to the sufficiency of the provisions of Act X of 1852 to meet the claims of the Inamdars of this Presidency. They accordingly directed that all Inams enjoyed uninterruptedly since the introduction of the British rule, whether held under Sanads or not, should be confirmed to the holders.⁴⁷ The only cases which they considered could be resumed were those in which lands had been acquired fraudulently or subsequently to the assumption of the country by the British, but even in those cases they wanted to show indulgence when the actual possessors were not privy to the fraud by imposing on such Inams a gradually increasing rate of assessment.⁴⁸ Even in the constant practice of Native Governments exacting a "Nazrana" or fine on succession to Inam property, they directed that a light assessment should be imposed in the nature of a jodi or quit rent on every Inam confirmed to the incumbent for personal benefit, and that it should be left to the option of the successive holders of Inams to redeem this quit-rent by the payment of a gross sum calculated according to rules to be framed for that purpose.⁴⁹ They felt that it might tend to reconcile the holders of such lands to the proposed quit-rent if the existing restrictions on the transfer of their estates from the line of the original grantees whether by sale, gift, or adoption were abrogated, and if an indefeasible and unrestricted right of property were granted to them.⁵⁰ They also directed the commencement of investigation with the least practicable delay by a distinct Department.

The Madras Inam Commission was accordingly established on the 16th November 1858 during the administration of Lord Harris.

and Mr. G. N. Taylor who was appointed Commissioner, shortly after proceeded to Bombay to learn, by personal conference with the authorities there, the details connected with the working of the Inam commission in that Presidency and with the proposed plan of treating Inam tenures for the future. In his reports⁵¹ Mr. Taylor proposed certain modes of procedure the object of which was to carry on the necessary registration through the District Revenue agency either under the orders of the Inam Commissioner or of a Member of the Board of Revenue.

While the subject was under consideration, Sir Charles Trevelyan arrived and assumed the Government of Madras. The first question which engaged his attention was the settlement of the Inams of the Presidency, and in his Minute of the 13th May, 1859 he propounded certain rules by which the principles enunciated by the Court of Directors were to be practically applied by the Inam Commissioner in the investigation upon which he was about to enter. The basis of his proposals was that when it could be proved that land had for fifty years been in the possession of a person, or of these through whom he claimed, without the payment of land tax, such length of possession should be held to be a good title to that land as Inam, whatever might have been the origin of the possession. The entries in the Revenue Accounts were to be considered as sufficient evidence of possession without the production of other proofs, and where the failure of proof of fifty years' possession was owing only to lapse of time, the Inamdar was to be allowed the same advantage as if possession had been proved for the full term. When the title to an Inam based on length of possession was once established, it was then to be open to the owner of an Inam held for personal benefit either to retain the Inam according to his actual tenure subject to the liability of lapse and without the power of alienation, or to enfranchise it by payment of an annual quit-rent or a single fixed sum equal to so many years' purchase of the quit-rent. With regard to service Inams, those that were attached to services still required were to be continued intact, but where the services were such that they could not be made available for useful public purpose, the value of the public claims on the land was to be calculated in the form of an annual quit-rent commutable at the discretion of the holder for a sum equal to the present value of the annuity. As regards lands forming endowments of Temples and Mosques held in remuneration for services to be rendered therein, these were to be confirmed on their existing tenures, and to be resumable only when the object for which they were held had ceased to exist. All questions of disputed right between individuals relating to Inams were to be settled according to the established forms in the ordinary Courts of justice. The claims of Government upon Inams previous to enfranchisement were to be determined by the officers of the Government; but after enfranchisement the Inams were to be in every respect under the protection of the Courts of Justice.⁵²

The scheme of settlement thus sketched was shortly afterwards worked out in detail by Mr. Taylor, and the rules and course of procedure which were to guide him and his Deputies were submitted to Government and approved by them.⁵³ The rationale of these rules were fully explained in Mr. Taylor's Report and its Appendix. They were based generally on the groundwork contained in the Minute of Sir Charles Trevelyan. The operations of the Inam Commission were conducted on these principles. Full information was prepared regarding the inams of each village by the talook and village officers, and the Deputy Collectors of the Commission inspected documents and took such further evidence as seemed proper, recording details in an English register in which the rate for enfranchisement was calculated and the acceptance or refusal of the inamdar recorded. These registers were subsequently forwarded to the Commissioner for review and confirmation and for the issue of a title deed. The progress of the work was at first somewhat impeded by the ignorance and mistrust of the people, as the imposition of the additional quit-rent was viewed as merely a step in the direction of the full assessment of all inam property; but when the character of the settlement became known opposition ceased and the operations of the commission proceeded with a rapidity hitherto unknown in the investigation of inam titles.⁵⁴ It dealt with various classes of inams. In addition to dealing with inams proper, the commission investigated and disposed of a large number of anomalies which had for some time disfigured the revenue system of the Presidency. These latter measures have greatly tended to simplify the revenue administration of several districts, and the discussion and final decision of many long-disputed rights between the Government and zamindars, between zamindars and inamdars and their tenants, have facilitated the revenue procedure of district officers in no small degree.

The Inams of South India can be divided broadly into four categories viz. (i) those inams held for the support of religious institutions, for services connected therein and by persons of various religious classes for their personal benefit. These can be called Devadayams. (ii) Those held by the families of Poligars, hereditary officers of trust under former Governments, kinsmen, dependents and followers of former poligars and Zamindars, and those given to persons who discharge their police, revenue and military services to their chiefs and to various descriptions of artisans for services due to village communities. All these can be called "Socio-political holdings". (iii) Those held for purposes of "public utility" or "social service" called Dharmadayams, and finally (iv) Those held for purposes of public works. These were called Dasabandhams.

confined to Tanjore and Tinnevely. They comprised roughly a quarter of all tax-free holdings. By the late 19th century 1,458 million acres, having a hypothetical tax potential of Rs.24,22,467 would come within this category.⁵⁵ The greatest portion of vast temple inams existed in the central south and extreme south. Attached to such great temples as those at Tirupati, Kanchipuram, Srirangam, Annamalai, Chidambaram, Rameswaram, Madurai and Tanjore (apart from those at Jagannath, Hampi and Sandoor which had lands in the Madras Presidency). There were land holdings of enormous size, value and importance.⁵⁶ The valuable endowments attached to the different matthams or spiritual headships of the three leading sects of Brahmins are also included under this head and they existed in almost all the districts of the presidency. There were, besides, minor religious institutions not presided over by Brahmins. These belong to bairagis and pandarams or religious mendicants and jangams or priests of the Lingayat sect. Landed endowments to Muhammadan institutions, though fewer, consisted of lands attached to mosques or places of public worship, takiyas or residences of fakirs, and dargahs or shrines of Muslim saints. The endowments attached to churches were very few and existed only in Tinnevely and Tanjore. More than half of all the inams in the Madras presidency were held by persons of "socio-religious (and political) merit". Most of them were held by Brahmans and many were of great antiquity. Such holdings were called agra-harams, brahmadayams, or shrotriyams or bhatta-vritti inams. Those held by Muslims were known as Khairati inams. By 1869 the socio-religious or devadayam and socio-political inams covered an area of 3,694,394 acres and had a tax potential of Rs. 54,89,928.⁵⁷

The inams which can be called "socio-political holdings" and which belonged to the second category at a higher level in the society, were the bissois and dorasthanams of jungled hills in the Northern Circars, the Samasthanams and Mukhasas of the Carnatic, the amarams of North Arcot, the Umligas of Salam and the jivithams of Madura or the deep south. These were alienated by poligars and nayaks to their men of rank of their own caste.⁵⁸ During the mounting turbulence of the 17th and 18th centuries the number of inams seems to have multiplied considerably. Petty chiefs, aspiring rajas, administrative officers and would be rulers assumed the power of granting inams. Poligars were especially active and "open-handed".⁵⁹ To this category, though of a late period, also belonged the inams held by the families of dispossessed poligars in the Ceded Districts, Chittoor Pollams, and the Baramahal and of the ancient Kanungos, Desbandyas and Desmukhs who had been permitted to enjoy certain lands free of all conditions of service to Government. When poligars were reduced at the cession of the territories to the British East India Company, certain pensions and inam lands were granted to the ex-poligars for their subsistence. Although a vague impression prevailed at the time that they were liable to be called out for police service during emergencies, the occasion for such services very seldom arose. Kanungos were the

provincial, and the Desbandyas the District, Registrars or Revenue Accountants. The Desmukhs were chief officers of police and revenue, corresponding generally to Zamindars. Their offices were abolished at a very early stage of the British administration and they were either granted inams or allowed to be held by them.⁶⁰ At a lower level in the society were the Kattubadi-inams. They were held by Kattubadi peons who discharged police, military and revenue duties. They were called into being by the poligars and were remunerated by these inams and paid 'batta' while on actual service. On the introduction of the British rule they were generally left in quiet possession of their inams and were but seldom called out for duty.⁶¹ These inams found in the greatest numbers in the Ceded districts and North Arcot.⁶² Also at the village level there were inams for every form of village need, service or function and for every kind of administrative duty performed for the benefit of higher levels of political authority. Manifold as these had been, the most important of them can conveniently be lumped together and called grama-maniyams.⁶³ These lands served as forms of hereditary pay and pension benefits given in lieu of cash salaries : special inams to village headmen (monigars, mattars, deshmukhs, etc.), to leaders of caste (Reddi, Pillai, Velama, etc.), and to many other officers and functionaries (grants of tambalas, matapaties, anakalas). There were inams to village artisans, musicians etc. The police and service inams amounted to 643,057 acres, having a hypothetical tax of Rs.7,29,859.⁶⁴

The third category of Inams granted and maintained for the support of eleemosynary institutions were known as "Dharmadayam" holdings. A great variety of Inams falls under this category which embraces those held for the support of chatrams (chavadi) Nirlupan-dals, Topes, Nandavanams, wells, ponds, tanks, bridges, lungarkhanas (hospitals), village schools and Veda Patasalas. All these covered as estimated in 1869 at least 156,949 acres and giving a hypothetical revenue of Rs. 3,07,912.⁶⁵

Inams of the fourth category, usually known as Dasabandams, were established for the specific purpose of developing and maintaining irrigation systems, the history of which in South India is very old.⁶⁶ These were confined chiefly to the Ceded Districts, the Western portions of Guntur, Nellore, North Arcot and Salem.⁶⁷ The extent of these inams has been estimated at 24,824 acres and the assessment at Rs. 1,40,715.⁶⁸ Dasabandams were granted as a recompense to private individuals who constructed tanks, wells and river-channels by means of which the revenue of the state was augmented. The extent and value of the inam were in proportion to the capital expended on the work and outturn in revenue. These were of two kinds namely Khanda dasabandanams or inams given in specific localities and Shamilat Dasabandams or the allowance as inam of a certain portion of each year's cultivation under the work in question. In all ordinary cases dasabandamdars were under

the obligation of maintaining the works of irrigation in due repair.⁶⁹ Connected to irrigation works was another category known as maramat-inams. These were granted for building bridges, roads, culverts, dams, buildings and the like.

In connection with the settlement of the rent-free tenures of the Presidency several measures of administrative reform had also been effected by the Inam Commission, the more important of which will now be noticed. In certain districts of the Presidency the *jodi* already charged on Inam lands was of a fluctuating character according to the terms of the grant or established usage. The *jodi* consisted in some districts of a certain rate to be levied on the quantity of grain grown on the Inams; in others, though the *jodi* was fixed, only so much of it was collected as was in proportion to the extent of the Inam actually brought under cultivation during the year. Of this description were the Hangami Jodi in Cuddapah, the Putla Kattubadi of the Krishna district, the variable *jodi* of certain Inams in Madura, and the Patam and Poruppu lands in Tinnevely. They involved an annual scrutiny by the village and subordinate revenue officers into the produce or the cultivation of each Inam, and as a consequence were attended with many abuses.⁷⁰ For these reasons all such *jodis* were permanently commuted into fixed sums calculated upon the average of the actual collections of past years or other equitable data.

There were a large number of Inam villages in various districts of the Presidency of similar uncertainty of tenure, in which the *jodi* payable to Government fluctuated with the cultivation of each year. The Tribhagam and Chaturbhagam Agraharams and the Riayat Mukhasas in the Kistna district, the Trishvekam tenures of Salem, the Hissa Shrotriyams of the Ceded districts, and the Ardhamanyam and Nelgutta villages in Tanjore were all of this character. The Government and the Inamdars held a joint interest and had a sort of joint management in these villages. As such there was no security of tenure and improvement of the villages.⁷¹ The Government interest in all these villages had been commuted by the Inam Commission into a fixed *jodi* fairly calculated with reference both to their past revenues and to the prospects of their future improvement, and the management of them had been entirely surrendered to the Inamdars.⁷² Where, from poverty, dissensions among the share holders, or the situation of the villages - the Inamdars were unable or unwilling to take them up on the proposed terms, they were allowed to select a tract of land yielding a revenue equal to what they had hitherto derived from the entire village.⁷³

Again there were certain Inam tenures the peculiarity of which was that they had no fixed locality assigned to them, but that they consisted in the deduction of a fixed extent or of a percentage out of the annual cultivation of the village, the proportionate revenue demand on which was paid to the Inamdars without being

brought to the public account.⁷⁴ Such tenures occurred in Tinnevely, and they had been settled by the Commission with the assignment of revenue on specific lands equivalent to the average value of the Inamdar's past receipts. The Sthala Inams of Trichinopoly were of the same description.

The Inams in the Ceded Districts generally and some Inams in Kurnool and Nellore were subject to certain extra cesses known respectively as Inamati Taffrik and Inamati Patti and Mera, the origin and incidence of which were of an arbitrary and oppressive nature.⁷⁵ The Inamati Taffrik in Cuddapah and Bellary was a tax nominally imposed on ryots with a view to restrain them from the cultivation of Inam in preference to Government lands, but it virtually fell on the Inams, out of whose rental it was eventually paid.⁷⁶ This tax was later abolished by the Inam Commission. The Patti of Kurnool was a *jodi* imposed under the administration of the Nawab for supposed defect of title. Its bearing upon the Inam lands was unequal and attended with hardship.⁷⁷ The Inam Commission had it discontinued and superceded by a more equitable and uniform quit-rent calculated at one-fourth of the assessment. The Mera in the Udayagiri Jagir in Nellore was a similar cess, but of a still more vexatious character.⁷⁸ It had ceased to be enforced ever since the resumption of the estate by the British. It was finally abandoned by the Commission. It is scarcely necessary to remark that the carrying out of these various measures has tended greatly to simplify the revenue administration of the districts which they affected.

A considerable extent of land, often comprising valuable property and wholly or partially exempted from the payment of assessment but not recognised in the public accounts as regular Inam property had also been brought to light. These lands were chiefly held by the Ratsawar class of cultivators in the Krishna and Godavary districts, who either from their social position as the caste men of the former Zamindars or as extensive cultivators had enjoyed these immunities from a long time.⁷⁹ Lands similarly held were found in other districts as well. Another class of tenures peculiar to the district of Madras was known as Grama-manyams. It was long doubted whether these Inams were held under any obligation of service due to the State or whether, as contended by some authorities, they were special privileges granted in compensation for the hardship incident to the occupation of that part of the country in which Mirasi is said to have exceptionally prevailed. These Inams were not held on condition of any service; they were freely alienated and enjoyed like any other private property. These were declared free from any disabilities and title deeds were issued. Many other questions of greater or less importance involving long disputed rights between the Government and Zamindars, Zamindars and Inamdars and Inamdars and their tenants, have also been taken up, discussed, and brought to a final decision under the sanction of Government.⁸⁰

the obligation of maintaining the works of irrigation in due repair.⁶⁹ Connected to irrigation works was another category known as *maramat-inams*. These were granted for building bridges, roads, culverts, dams, buildings and the like.

In connection with the settlement of the rent-free tenures of the Presidency several measures of administrative reform had also been effected by the Inam Commission, the more important of which will now be noticed. In certain districts of the Presidency the *jodi* already charged on Inam lands was of a fluctuating character according to the terms of the grant or established usage. The *jodi* consisted in some districts of a certain rate to be levied on the quantity of grain grown on the Inams; in others, though the *jodi* was fixed, only so much of it was collected as was in proportion to the extent of the Inam actually brought under cultivation during the year. Of this description were the Hangami *Jodi* in Cuddapah, the Putla Kattubadi of the Krishna district, the variable *jodi* of certain Inams in Madura, and the Patam and Poruppu lands in Tinnevely. They involved an annual scrutiny by the village and subordinate revenue officers into the produce or the cultivation of each Inam, and as a consequence were attended with many abuses.⁷⁰ For these reasons all such *jodis* were permanently commuted into fixed sums calculated upon the average of the actual collections of past years or other equitable data.

There were a large number of Inam villages in various districts of the Presidency of similar uncertainty of tenure, in which the *jodi* payable to Government fluctuated with the cultivation of each year. The Tribhagam and Chaturbhagam Agraharams and the Riayat Mukhasas in the Kistna district, the Trishvekam tenures of Salem, the Hissa Shrotriyams of the Ceded districts, and the Ardhamanyam and Nelgutta villages in Tanjore were all of this character. The Government and the Inamdars held a joint interest and had a sort of joint management in these villages. As such there was no security of tenure and improvement of the villages.⁷¹ The Government interest in all these villages had been commuted by the Inam Commission into a fixed *jodi* fairly calculated with reference both to their past revenues and to the prospects of their future improvement, and the management of them had been entirely surrendered to the Inamdars.⁷² Where, from poverty, dissensions among the share holders, or the situation of the villages - the Inamdars were unable or unwilling to take them up on the proposed terms, they were allowed to select a tract of land yielding a revenue equal to what they had hitherto derived from the entire village.⁷³

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The question of inam was so important and crucial to the stability of British rule during the 19th century that for many years it "engaged the anxious attention of many eminent men, not only in Madras Presidency but throughout India and in England."⁸¹ It took a long time of about 60 years for discovering a right method of dealing with the difficult problem of Inam. The subject was so wrought with important social and political consequences that at the outset the Inam Commission (in 1858) considered it unsafe to begin with more than a single district. During the 19th century Inam was a source of perplexity to every successive Government, a cause of much irritation among a very influential section of the community, and an ever-increasing burden on the local officers, but a vast mass of valuable property.⁸²

The total number of Inams confirmed, the quit-rent charged by the Inam Commission, and the cost of the commission from its commencement to 31st March, 1884 were as shown below.⁸³

Total Inams	Area in Acres	Assessment Rs.	Old Jody Rs.	Quit-rent Rs.	Cost Rs.
444,496	6,752,803	1,06,13,894	9,42,676	17,94,063	13,95,387

Landed property in which not less than 2 1/2 million persons were in some measure interested, and extending to nearly 6 1/4 millions of acres in area, which was lately held on defective and doubtful titles, and which paid to the revenue less than one-tenth of the regulated land assessment, had been confirmed to the holders on indefeasible Government titles and the measure had resulted in a clear gain to the revenue of about 17 1/2 lakhs of rupees per annum.⁸⁴

FOOTNOTES

1. C. D. Maclean, *Manual of Administration of the Madras Presidency in Illustration of the Records of Government and the yearly Administration Reports*, Vol. I, Madras, 1885, p. 166, *The Humble Petition of the Madras Native Association and others, Native Inhabitants of the Presidency of Madras, dated 10th December, 1852*, para 1-4, in *Appendix to the Report from the Select Committee on Indian Territories, 1852*, pp. 438-472, India Office Library, London.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 167.
3. S. Sundararaja Iyengar, *Land Tenures in the Madras Presidency* (Madras, 1916) Students Edition, Madras, 1933, p. 203.
4. *Ibid.*
5. *Ibid.*

Inam Tenures of South India

6. W. T. Blair (Officiating Inam Commissioner) to R. A. Dalyell (Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort St. George), *Inam Commission Report, 30th October, 1869*, Madras, Broken down in Appendix C, pp. 18-19.
7. Robert Eric Frykenberg, *The Silent Settlement in South India, 1793-1853; An Analysis of the Role of Inams in the Rise of the Indian Imperial System*, in Robert Eric Frykenberg (ed.), *Land Tenure and Peasant in South Asia*, New Delhi, 1977, p. 40.
8. Eric Stokes, *The Peasant and the Raj*, New Delhi, 1978, p. 59.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 64.
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11. D. Subramanyam Reddy, *Aspects of the British Revenue Settlements and Revolt of the Carnatic Poligars with special reference to Chittoor Pollams, 1803-1805* article, published in *Itihas : A Journal of the A. P. State Archives*, Vol. IX & X Hyderabad, 1982, *Aspects of British Revenue Settlements in Andhra : Revolt of the Carnatic Poligars : A Case study of Chittoor Pollams, 1803-1805*, unpublished M.Phil thesis, submitted to Nagarjuna University, Guntur, April, 1983, *Anti-British Revolts in Andhra : A Study of the Poligars of Chittoor Pollams against the British*, an U.G.C. Research Project submitting shortly to the U.G.C. New Delhi, J.C.Dua, *Nature of the Poligar Revolts in the Ceded Districts during the first half of the Nineteenth Century : A Case Study*, Indian History Congress proceedings of the Thirty Fifth Session, Jadavpur (Calcutta), 1974, Catherine Margaret Sandin, *The Cuddapah Rebellion of 1846*, Madison University of Wisconsin, unpublished M.A. Thesis, 1973, cited by Robert Eric Frykenberg in his article, *Company Circari in the Carnatic C. 1799-1859 : The Inner Logic of Political Systems in India*, in Richard G. Fox (ed.), *Realm and Region in Traditional India*, New Delhi, 1977, p. 157, Frykenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
12. Robert Eric Frykenberg, in Richard G. Fox, *op. cit.*, p. 154.
13. Robert Eric Frykenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 47 & 49.
14. W. T. Blair, *Inam Commission Report, 30th October, 1869*, *op. cit.*, p. 1, para 3.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 1, para 4.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 2, para 5.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 2, para 6.
18. Eric Stokes, *op. cit.*, p. 64.
19. W. T. Blair, *Inam Commission Report, 30th October, 1869*, *op. cit.*, p. 2, para 7.
20. *Ibid.*, para 8.

21. Madras Regulation XXXI of 1802, Fort St. George.
22. Madras Regulation IV of 1831, Acts XXXI of 1831 and XXXIII of 1831.
23. Madras Regulation VI of 1831.
24. W. T. Blair, Inam Commission Report, 30th October, 1869, *op. cit.*, p. 8, para 12.
25. Minute of Consultation, dated 26th April, 1845, Revenue Department, No. 533.
26. Proclamation dated 16th March, 1846, Government of Fort St. George.
27. Revenue Despatches to England dated 2nd November, 1846 No. 49, para 18 & 19.
28. Judicial Despatches from England dated 13th October, 1847, No. 19.
29. *Ibid.*
30. Revenue Despatches from England No. 2 of 1848, para 13.
31. Board's Minutes of Consultation, dated 9th May, 1848, 11th May, 1848, Board's Proceedings dated 19th June, 1848, Minutes of consultation, dated 4th July, 1848, Board's Circular Order, dated 27th July, 1848.
32. Proclamation, dated 27th July, 1848 Government of Fort St. George.
33. W. T. Blair, Inam Commission Report, 30th October, 1869, *op. cit.*, p. 5, para 18.
34. Daniel Elliott's Minute, dated 2nd December 1848 cited in *ibid.*
35. W. T. Blair, Inam Commission Report, 30th October, 1869, *op. cit.*, p. 5, para 20.
36. Despatches from England, dated 27th September, 1854, No. 21, para 3 & 6.
37. Board's Minutes of Consultation, dated 14th August, 1855, No. 9, para 34.
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40. Board to Government dated 9th February, 1856, No. 390.
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42. Board's proceedings dated 16th July 1856, No. 2235.

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44. Regulation XXXI of 1802, Section 8, Fort St. George.
45. Government of Fort St. George to the Court of Directors, dated 1st July, 1857, 8th January, 1858, 15th May, 1858.
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53. Report of Taylor to Government of Fort St. George, dated 6th July, 1859, Government's Minutes of Consultation, dated 9th August, 1859, No. 1069, Appendix A.
54. C. D. Maclean, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 167.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
56. W. T. Blair, Inam Commission Report, 30th October, 1869, p. 12, para 42.
57. C. D. Maclean, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 169.
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60. W. T. Blair, Inam Commission Report, 30th October, 1869, *op. cit.*, p. 13, para 50.
61. C. D. Maclean, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 169.
62. *Ibid.*

63. For more details about service grants see : S. Sundararaja Iyengar, *op.cit.*, pp. 77-79, and 233-268.
64. W. T. Blair, *Inam Commission Report, 30th October, 1869, op.cit.*, Appendix B, pp. 14-17, paras 51-65 and Table on pp. 18-19.
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66. For a brief history and several examples of these inams see : M.P.R. Reddy, *Agrarian System in Andhra Pradesh, 1757-1807*, project work submitted to the L.C.H.R. in 1978.
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68. *Ibid.*
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70. *Ibid.*, p. 15, para 57.
71. *Ibid.*, para 58.
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*, p. 16, para 58.
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75. *Ibid.*, para 60.
76. *Ibid.*
77. *Ibid.*
78. *Ibid.*
79. *Ibid.*, para 62.
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LORD RIPON AND HYDERABAD STATE, 1880-1884

Bharati Ray

Introduction

The policy of the British towards the princely states constitutes one of the most important segments of their imperial strategy in India. The manner in which they allowed these states to sustain as distinct political entities, offers a fascinating field of investigation to historians and political scientists alike. And yet while modern Indian historiography has focussed considerable attention on British India, the history of the Indian states, which formed one-third of the subcontinent, is largely unwritten. During the past few years, however, a set of scholarly studies has emerged. A whole lot of questions are being asked, and sophisticated interpretations evolved. Robin Jeffrey (ed.), *People, Princes and Paramount Power* (Delhi, 1978), probably the most significant contribution on the field, directs a penetrating look into the society and politics within a few major states. Urmila Phadnis, *Towards the Integration of the Indian States, 1919-1947* (Bombay, 1968), Barbara Ramusack, *The Princes of India in the Twilight of Empire* (Columbus, 1978), L.I. and S. H. Rudolph's paper on Rajputana and Karen Leoanard's article 'on Hyderabad'¹ investigate the complex phenomena of the internal tensions and the multi-dimensional forces operating within princely India.

The main thrust of current researches is on the questions why and how the people and the princes responded the way they did to the paramount power's role and whether and how far the changes in the states were really responses to the British intrusion. But this perspective leaves us in the shadows about the other side of the picture. Why did the British take the steps they did? What did they hope to gain in political and economic assets? The purpose of this paper is to analyze the imperial policy as applied specifically to the state of Hyderabad, the largest in the 'princely pantheon'² of India, and to map out the system of alliances that the British sought to evolve in the state. An attempt will be made to look closely into the history of four years, from 1880 to 1884, when Ripon was the Viceroy of India. This particular period is selected because Ripon's rule has been regarded by scholars as "momentous" in Indian history, a chapter in 'Liberal experiment'. It was a "daring viceroyalty" says Gopal,³ the Viceroy "almost touched the high-watermark of genius" writes his biographer Lucien Wolf.⁴ It will be interesting to examine how and why this "daring" Viceroy formulated his Hyderabad policy. The study is worth making because none of the well-known works on Ripon highlights this aspect of his administration. Nevertheless, significant developments emerged

in Hyderabad during the brief space of those four years. And an analysis of Ripon's moves and attitudes will clearly reveal the imperial face of liberalism. It will also show how the system of indirect rule operated to subserve the interests of the paramount power, and paramount power only, and how Ripon was subjected to the ingrained habits of imperial behaviour.

Historical scholarship has now established that on the unsteady base of foreign soil the Raj needed collaborators, and that in the post 1857 period the princes were chosen as its principal local allies.⁵ Their states were not annexed, and yet were kept under complete control through the exercise of paramountcy. As the princes, however loyal, could not be fully trusted (to be sure they knew themselves to be the rightful rulers), the British had to build an internal system of checks and balances and to rule through collaborators within the domestic situation. The best way obviously was to forge an alliance with the minister. In Hyderabad, the traditional British policy was to put up a pro-British Minister, who would look up to them and do their bidding.⁶ But what happened if their political arithmetic went wrong? Such a crisis did appear when the anglophil Minister Salar Jung, who had co-operated with the Resident in multiple ways and who had striven successfully for the physical modernisation of the state along British lines,⁷ slowly started to challenge their political authority. At once Lytton, the then Viceroy, turned against him, humiliated him and allied with the conservative elements in the state. Ripon reversed the stance, or in other words, changed the alliance system, without of course altering the fundamental policy of indirect rule through local collaborators. During the first two years of his Viceroyalty, Ripon turns back to Salar Jung -- the primary reason behind the shift was the calculation that the minister, now thoroughly subdued, would become a dependable ally, if placated. Obviously, with a friendly and pliable minister, the system of indirect rule would work better. After Salar Jung's sudden death, there followed a period of confusion and indecision. And then a young pro-British *diwan* was chosen, a step which would ensure British control over the state. What is worthy of note here is the fact that all along British interests were sought and pursued. While lip-service to Hyderabad's welfare was expressed, in terms of historical realities, there was total indifference. And yet, probably this was the time, as we shall see, when some protection was needed against a planned exploitation of the state by a set of British capitalists and their Hyderabad collaborator.

The Man and the Setting

Ripon's appointment to the Indian Viceroyalty, on Gladstone's victory at the poll in 1880, was greeted with much public enthusiasm. Known to be close to Gladstone, Ripon was regarded as his personal representative, sent out "to give expression and effect in India to the temper and energy of English liberalism."⁸ It was widely hoped that Ripon would alter British attitude towards India as well

as the policy of war and aggression, represented by Disraeli and his agent, Lytton.

What sort of man was he who aroused these expectations? Trained from childhood in diplomacy, son of a Prime Minister (born in 10 Downing Street during his father's short premiership), this Yorkshire nobleman was sober, shrewd and known to be a man of integrity and of Radical leanings (developed under the influence of men like Charles Kingsley, Thomas Hughes and J. H. Ludlow). He had previous Indian experience, as Under Secretary for India in 1861 and Secretary in 1866. He came to India, it has been said, with a sense of a mission and the feeling that he had been chosen by God to do some good for the Indian people.⁹ Once on the Indian soil, he expressed thorough disapproval of Lytton's Indian policy. "If you knew what I know now of the spirit which animated the late administration of this country and the means which it employed, you would feel even more strongly than you do now from which mischiefs the late election delivered us," so he wrote to his patron, Gladstone. His mission was, he declared, to convince the people of India that "we desire to govern them in their own interest and to promote their welfare and not any selfish or narrow national objects of our own."¹⁰

A laudable sentiment. How did he apply these ideas in the specific arena of Hyderabad? And to what extent, if at all, were necessary steps taken for the 'interest' and 'welfare' of the state? To assess these issues it is necessary to look at the scene as it was when Ripon came and at the structure of authority in the state.

Ripon inherited from Lytton a tension-fraught relationship with Hyderabad. The state, which had always been a faithful ally of the British,¹¹ was under an infant Nizam, Mahbub Ali Khan. The *diwan* Salar Jung and the Amir-i-Kabir, who was the head of the nobility in the state, were the Co-Regents (appointed with the sanction of the Government of India). Salar Jung was entrusted with conducting the work of administration.¹² He had started his career as a principal collaborator of the British, but the entente slowly went adrift. The central point of the disagreement was Berar, which Dalhousie had compelled the ruling Nizam to assign to the British in 1853.¹³ The Government of India had unceremoniously rejected Salar Jung's repeated requests for its restoration.¹⁴ Around this moot problem other difficulties reared their heads. Having lost all faith in the sense of justice of Calcutta, Salar Jung decided to rely on London and left for England. At this time Lytton arrived in India in 1876. A loyal Disraelian, he came to India to carry out the principles of conservative imperialism and was intent on establishing the colonial sociology of India.¹⁵ Lytton took a great dislike to Salar Jung's European tour (undertaken obviously to canvas support for his Berar scheme), to his attempts at army reform (it posed a threat to the security of the Raj) and to his assertions (which

were "impudent" in Lyttonian terminology) in England. Lytton was convinced that Salar Jung was trying to establish Hyderabad "as an independent state within the heart of India."¹⁶ His fears were confirmed when Salar Jung at the time of the Imperial Assemblage in Delhi (to proclaim the Queen's assumption of the title of the Empress of India) raised the issue of Berar again and seemed to question, though indirectly, the rights of suzerainty exercised by the British Crown over the Nizam. This brought the minister into a headlong clash with the Viceroy. Lytton snubbed him ruthlessly on the Berar issue and compelled him to write a letter acknowledging the Queen's suzerainty over the Nizam. And when Salar Jung's colleague and Co-Regent, the Amir-i-Kabir died, Lytton appointed the new Amir-i-Kabir (the former Vikar-ul-Umra) as Co-Regent. Salar Jung and the new Amir-i-Kabir were implacable personal enemies and represented two opposing factions in Hyderabad politics. By supporting the Amir on all occasions and by controlling the administrative machinery through him, Resident Meade, Lytton's agent at Hyderabad, succeeded in crippling Salar Jung's power. A pledge was also taken from him not to reopen the Berar question during the Nizam's minority. In short, the alienation between Salar Jung and the Government of India was complete.¹⁷

Alliance with Salar Jung

It was at this juncture that Ripon relieved Lytton in India. Although he prided himself on his 'welfare' mission and lofty idealism, Ripon was as much a supporter of the paramountcy of the British and of their theory of Colonial rule as his predecessor had been. If he adopted a tone of some sort of equality in dealing between the Indians and the British (as later shown in the Ilbert Bill controversy), he never for a moment forgot the role of the paramount power. As regards Hyderabad, it was not the basic policy of indirect rule that he questioned, but merely Lytton's methods of implementing it. Ripon was more tactful and diplomatic. He disliked Lytton's treatment of Salar Jung - "foolish and violent to a high degree" - and was anxious to be on better terms with the Hyderabad Minister. In Ripon's view, Salar Jung's "difficulties" with the Indian Government had stemmed initially from the indiscreet manner in which the Minister had been treated while in England. Salar Jung should not be allowed to intrigue with people at home. At the same time Lyttonian highhandedness was to be abandoned. The essence of Ripon's plans was to replace "the system of distrust and check" by a "frank and open policy", and to restore relations with Hyderabad once more upon a footing of cordiality. These views were neatly summarised in a private letter to Secretary of State, Hartington, "The true way to deal with the subject is... to take a new departure in regard to British relations with Salar Jung, without of course abandoning the watchfulness which it is necessary to maintain in the case of a person who is evidently so prone to intrigue as Sir Salar Jung, or allowing him to assume the uncontrolled power at

which it seems evident that he formerly aimed".¹⁸ It was in that sense that he directed Stuart Bayley, whom he appointed as Resident at Hyderabad in place of Meade, to act.

Bayley proved to be a capable political officer. He carried out the instructions "skillfully and correctly", was able to "manage local politics very well",¹⁹ and built up friendly understanding with Salar Jung. Our personal relations are most friendly confidential",²⁰ he was able to report to his chief within a few months of his landing at Hyderabad.

Co-Regency or Sole Regency?

Bayley studied the Hyderabad situation carefully. He felt that the appointment of a Co-Regent in 1877 had an injurious effect on the administration of the state. The imposition of the Amir-i-Kabir on Salar Jung and the feeling that the Amir, backed by the Resident, was there in a position always to refuse his assent, hampered seriously Salar Jung's internal policy and checked his initiative to introduce new reforms.²¹ There was much truth in this assessment. "The state as far as I can see is drifting to ruin", Salar Jung, frustrated with constant interference from the Amir in a thousand and one petty things, bitterly complained to a friend.²² Syed Hossain Bilgrani, his secretary (later Director of Public Instruction), echoed the same sentiment when he described Hyderabad as "augean stable". On the eve of Ripon's arrival in India he said, "If matters do not mend in the new Viceroy's reign, the administration is bound to come to a deadlock soon. Matters must mend or come to a crash".²³

In view of this situation, Bayley gave his unequivocal verdict against the "double arrangement". He felt that some check on Salar Jung might have been necessary in 1877, but the situation had altered since then. For instance, the Berar issue was shelved; Salar Jung no longer insisted on the expansion of the Nizam's army, nor did he try to create trouble by intriguing with the people in England. On the other hand, he was sincerely desirous of working in harmony with the British.²⁴ The Nizam's minority had only three years to go. This was too short a time to consolidate the Minister's position and power. And no one knew better than Salar Jung himself that his relations might be difficult with the new Nizam (as they had been with his father) and that his position in future would again depend on the extent of British support. He would, therefore, be rather an ally than a foe of the British.²⁴ It was a shrewd assessment of the situation. Ripon was in full agreement with his Resident. The idea of not appointing a successor, in the event of the Amir's death, commended itself to him.²⁵

The decision was not taken a day too soon, because the Amir actually died on 12th December, 1881. The Government was at once faced with the choice of either electing a successor to the

Co-Regency or leaving Salar Jung as the sole administrator. In this context, Ripon's instructions to Bayley were clear enough. Bayley was to treat Salar Jung with confidence and to tell him:

"We see that there are objections to the introduction of a fresh element into the administration for the short period which will elapse before the Nizam's majority; we fully recognise your experience and ability in the management of the state, and we are prepared to abstain from insisting upon the appointment of a new Co-Regent, if you on your part will give us satisfactory assurance of your determination to act in loyal co-operation with the Government of India, and to place your reliance upon them, and also of your intention to conduct the young Prince's education in a manner which will remedy the defects and obviate the evils, of which we have had so much cause to complain, and which will tend to fit His Highness for the responsible duties upon which he will enter before long." ²⁶

This was the guideline set before Bayley and as to the details and mode of executing it, Ripon was pleased to leave it in the Resident's capable hands. "If we can do this", Ripon advocated strongly to the Secretary of State, "it would have a good effect not only in Hyderabad, but throughout India." ²⁷

Bayley was quick to send his report. Promptly came the telegram that Salar Jung had given "satisfactory assurance" on all the points mentioned by the Viceroy. ²⁸ Ripon's Council, therefore, unanimously accepted the Ripon-Bayley stand, and decided to discontinue the dud Government in Hyderabad. No successor was appointed to the Amir-i-Kabir's place as Co-Regent, though his son Khurshed Jah succeeded him as the new Amir-i-Kabir. Salar Jung was to be regarded as responsible for the judicious control of the state-affairs and for the education of the young Nizam. He was left as sole Regent until the Nizam came of age. ²⁹

This was Ripon's stance, and it was an intelligent one. The British regained an ally who represented the forces of modernisation and westernisation in Hyderabad. This was an important achievement from the British point of view, since an essential element in their imperial assumption was the firm belief in the superiority of the western civilisation over the Indian; the imperial mission was to model India on western lines. Indeed, Ripon and Bayley had calculated correctly. Salar Jung appreciated their gesture. ³⁰ He must have realised by now that one individual could not fight against the organised machinery of indirect rule, and that at best he could come to terms with reality and carry on the administration with the advice of the Resident. The co-operation between the Minister and the Government of India was, therefore, restored.

Because of the alliance with Salar Jung it was possible for the Government of India to sort out smoothly several important

problems. One was the Nizam's education. The boy Nizam was still at an impressionable age with ideas and attitudes in the process of formation. In another three years he would attain maturity, and these years were naturally of crucial importance from the British point of view.

At the time of the Nizam's succession to the *musnud* in 1869, Viceroy Mayo had decided that the young prince was to be given a liberal education and that an Englishman was to be entrusted with the duty of supervising his education. ³¹ The idea, of course, was that the Nizam would grow up under English influence, and become a friend of the British. Not unnaturally, the Hyderabad durbar had disliked the thought of an Englishman taking charge of the Nizam. Nevertheless, aware that there was no option, Salar Jung had managed to have Capt. Claude Clerk, the son of a friend, appointed as the Nizam's tutor. ³² The British officials, however, felt that greater supervision was needed. ³³ Bayley, therefore, persuaded Salar Jung, a willing collaborator again, to sign a formal resolution of the Nizam's Government for regulating the education and training of the Nizam. By this document, the superintendent of the Nizam's education was invested with great authority. He was empowered to regulate the place and hours of the Nizam's study and recreation, the number and composition of his attendants and the expenditure on his private allowance. The resolution satisfied the Viceroy, and the Secretary of State agreed that its principles were of a nature likely to secure the desired objectives. ³⁴ To be sure, the Nizam was to be educated with a certain object in view, and the object was only too obvious from the contents of his curriculum, his daily routine and the supervision so well exercised on him.

Another issue which attracted the attention of the Government of India, and a great deal of it, concerned opium. As is well known, the bulk of the Indian opium was exported to China to pay for China tea for the English market. ³⁵ There were two sources of the supply of opium in India -- the Bengal opium or the opium grown in British India, and Malwa opium or the opium grown in the princely states of Central India and Rajputana. The Government of India had a monopoly over Bengal opium. The Malwa opium was permitted to be shipped to China through Bombay on payment of a duty. To prevent smuggling, it was imperative to ensure that the duty on, and the selling price of, Malwa opium imported into British provinces as well as princely states for local consumption should not be less than its export duty. ³⁶ The Government of India wanted to maintain parity between the internal price and the export price of opium, and also to keep the price within the princely states at the same level as that in British India.

In this respect, Hyderabad posed a serious problem. In the first place, the poppy was cultivated and processed in Hyderabad,

though the produce was not adequate to meet the local demand. The state imported Malwa opium, but levied no duty on the import. The difference in the price of the drug in British India and the Nizam's state naturally offered temptation to smugglers. The India Government, therefore, suggested that the Nizam prohibit the cultivation of poppy in Hyderabad. Salar Jung agreed. New rules were framed for the state, after consultation with the Resident. The cultivation of poppy and the manufacture of opium in the state were prohibited. So was its export. Import of opium into Hyderabad was allowed only under a licence, obtained by the Nizam's Government through the Resident from the opium agent at Malwa, on payment of the duty thereon. The duty was at that time rupees seven hundred per chest of 140 pounds avoirdupois, as in the case of Malwa opium intended for export by sea. This duty, after deducting the cost of opium, was to be credited to the Nizam's territory.³⁷ These rules obviously served the purpose of the Government of India well. The price of opium in Hyderabad was kept high enough to prevent its smuggling into British territory; British opium interests were preserved.

The Railway and Mining Interests

I have already indicated in another paper the significant development concerning the railways and the mines in Hyderabad that took place during Ripon's viceroyalty.³⁸ But it is necessary to repeat it briefly.

In terms of an agreement concluded in 1870 between the Indian Government and the Hyderabad Government, a railway, to be known as the Nizam's State Railway, was to run from Wadi on the G.I.P. line (the Bombay-Madras sector) to Hyderabad and Secunderabad. While the Government of India was to construct and manage the line through the Resident at Hyderabad, the Nizam's Government was to provide, with the aid of shareholders, all the capital required for the construction, maintenance and working of the railway.³⁹ Accordingly, in 1873, by an edict of the Nizam, the Nizam's State Railway Company was formed for providing the capital for the construction of the railway and acquiring all rights (not sovereignty, though) and liabilities of the Nizam's Government under the agreement of 1870.⁴⁰ Since local funds were not flowing in, the Company decided to sell some of its shares in England. On its behalf, Smith, Fleming and Company of London approached the Secretary of State Salisbury begging him not to apply the Statute of 1797 (which prohibited British capitalists from getting involved in financial transactions with Indian princes) in this case. Salisbury permitted the sale of the Company's shares in England.⁴¹ Shares were issued and immediately subscribed, creating a group of English shareholders of the Nizam's State Railway Company.

Meanwhile, in 1872 coal of excellent quality had been discovered at Singareni (near the Godavari) in the Nizam's dominion.⁴² This added a new dimension to the entire question. The demand for coal in India was rising fast with the expansion of the network

of Indian railways. It was undoubtedly a highly lucrative business to work the mines. In view of this, Salar Jung decided to extend the railway (which was opened in 1874) through the Singareni upto the Godavari in the south and to Chanda (where, too, coal had been found) in the north.⁴³ This time, however, his attempt to raise the necessary capital in England proved abortive, because Viceroy Lytton and his Council unanimously opposed the suspension of the statutory prohibition in favour of Hyderabad.⁴⁴

When Ripon came, the railway question took a completely new turn. In the winter of 1881, Abdul Hak, a Hyderabad Government servant, brought from an agent of a syndicate of capitalists in England a proposal to form a Company in London to buy the existing railway and to build a new line from Hyderabad to Chanda in the north as well as to the Godavari in the South (on condition of a guaranteed interest on the capital and the grant of monopoly over the mines in Hyderabad).⁴⁵ It should be mentioned here that the projected line was of great strategic value to the Government of India. If joined with the Wardhwa line in the north, it would considerably shorten the through connection between Calcutta and the Central Provinces on the one hand and the Deccan and the Madras Presidency on the other.⁴⁶ If such a convenient railway could be constructed at the Nizam's expense indeed why not?

Naturally, the Foreign Office was exuberant.⁴⁷ But Ripon felt that the promoters of the project were unreliable. In his view, a striking contrast with that of Lytton, the employment of private British capital for the construction of new railways in Hyderabad should not be barred. At any rate, such prohibition did not fall within the purview of the Act of 1797. What Ripon would guard against, however, was allowing undesirable speculators to exploit the state. He would certainly encourage the railway enterprise if British capitalists of good standing took the project up.⁴⁸

Upto this point Ripon had clearly exerted himself to project the interests of the allied state. Henceforward, however, his attitude lacked both firmness and direction. This is all the more deplorable because at the time Abdul Hak and a group of British investors were scheming to exploit the financial and mineral resources of Hyderabad.

In consultation with Abdul Hak (who had gone to England to arrange with a company to undertake the railway and mining projects), Morton, Rose and Company of England submitted a railway proposal covering both the construction of the new line and the take-over of the existing one. The investment required was to carry an interest guaranteed by the Nizam at 5% per annum for twenty-five years.⁴⁹ Salar Jung rejected the terms on the ground that they were unfavourable to his state. It is significant that Secretary

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of State Hartington was much annoyed with this decision. In a private letter to Ripon he suggested that Evelyn Baring (who was a nominee of Hartington in Ripon's Council) should go to Hyderabad to discuss the Morton Rose proposal with Salar Jung, or in other words, to persuade Salar Jung to accept it. It is difficult to explain Hartington's unusual interest in the matter of the Hyderabad railway. Reading in between the lines of his private letters to Ripon it seems that he was won over by Abdul Hak and a section of powerful British investors.⁵⁰ In any case, a second proposal from Morton, Rose and Company was brought to Hyderabad personally by Abdul Hak in November 1882. Baring visited the state in December and the following January Salar Jung quietly accepted the scheme. Little doubt, he was powerless to withstand the pressure from Abdul Hak and his principal ally, Major Trevor, the First Assistant Resident (virtually the Resident),⁵¹ not to mention the "discussions" with Baring.

The Morton, Rose and Company proposed that a joint stock company with a share capital of £ 300,000 be formed, which would construct the projected railway and purchase the existing one. The Nizam's Government would have to pay 5% interest for twenty years on all money towards the capital, as well as the purchase money for the existing line.⁵²

The private correspondence between Ripon and Bayley (who had by now left Hyderabad to join the Viceroy's Council) reveals that neither of them thought the proposal advantageous for Hyderabad.⁵³ It would bind the Nizam for twenty long years to pay an amount of interest which was beyond the resources of the state. What was worse, the proposal enjoined on Hyderabad the payment of interest on the amount of capital as well as on the purchase money for the existing line, a ground on which Salar Jung had rejected the earlier offer from the Company. And yet Ripon kept aloof and offered no advice or help, because the proposal was supported at home, and was meant to serve a strong clan of British investing interests.

Connected with the Morton Rose railway scheme, although kept apart from it, was another proposal mooted by Messrs. Watson and Stewart of London for concessions of mining rights throughout the state of Hyderabad. They deposited £ 1,000,000 with powers, to increase it, to work all the mines, whether coal or otherwise, that were already registered in the Nizam's territory, or that might be registered within five years. The mining concession was to run for ninety-nine years and the concessionaires would pay the Hyderabad Government a fixed amount of royalty on net profits from the sale of gold, silver and coal.⁵⁴ Although the concessions demanded were far too many, Salar Jung approved the scheme, without making any enquiry, under relentless pressure from Abdul Hak, powerfully supported by the home government and the ruthless Trevor. Here again, as in the case of the railway, Ripon chose not

to interfere. The Indian Government, therefore, disclaimed any responsibility for the scheme, while approving it.

Before the conclusion of either the railway or the mining agreement, Salar Jung died suddenly. The mining agreement, after some modifications, was concluded in 1886,⁵⁵ after Ripon had left India. But the railway settlement was concluded during his viceroyalty. Morton, Rose and Company, however, withdrew from the scheme, probably because the time-limit set by it, viz., 1st April, 1883, had expired before the final acceptance reached them. Abdul Hak went to England and negotiated with W.C. Watson to float a railway company known as the Nizam's Guaranteed State Railway Company.⁵⁶ Watson's railway proposal, a modified version of the Morton Rose proposal, was strongly supported by Resident Cordery, who had doubtless allied with Abdul Hak. The Council of Regency was persuaded - actually threatened - by Cordery to accept it,⁵⁷ and the agreement was concluded between the Nizam's Government and the Nizam's Guaranteed State Railway Company Limited on 27th December, 1883.⁵⁸ Calcutta and London gave their sanction to the deal.

If it was unfortunate that Hartington had been won over by the British capitalists and middlemen, if it was inexcusable that the Indian Foreign Office, in its desire to get the strategic railway made at the Nizam's cost, overlooked all other considerations, it is no less a sad comment on Ripon that he let the various proposals pass. He could not have been blind to the undue pressure exerted on Salar Jung and the Council of Regency. Nor could he have failed to appreciate the financial implications of the scheme to the protected state. If he meant (as he often declared) to rule India as a trust, in the interest of the Indians and not that of the British, he failed so far as Hyderabad was concerned. In terms of historical reality, he became a party to gross injustice towards Hyderabad, if merely through his silence.

The Crisis in Hyderabad Administration

Salar Jung, as it has been mentioned earlier, died suddenly on 8th February, 1883. His sudden death created a serious situation for the Government of India. A major concern was making fresh administrative arrangements for the state, at least during the Nizam's minority. Within the domestic situation, serious conflicts broke out among differing groups and sub-groups, especially between the Mulkis and the non-Mulkis. In the process of centralizing the administration, Salar Jung had made the diwan's position one of crucial importance in the power structure of the state. A scramble for the diwanship, was, therefore only natural. Party interests worked hard in the court of the Nizam and in the parlour of the Residency.⁵⁹

In this setting, several courses were proposed to the Government of India. Resident Jones advised the formation of a Provisional Government (until the Nizam came of age), consisting of Bashir-ud-daula, who was the nephew of the late Amir-i-Kabir, and Raja Narendar Bahadur, who had acted as the Peshkar since 1853. Mir Laik Ali, Salar Jung's young son, was to be associated with the Peshkar as an assistant. Bayley, now Ripon's chief adviser on Hyderabad affairs, was on the other hand convinced that the main need was to keep things going as they had hitherto done. He, therefore, suggested that Salar Jung's son should be made the *diwan* and the Peshkar, an old and experienced man, should be associated with him. The two cousins, Bashir-ud-daula and Khurshid Jah (he was presently the Amir-i-Kabir), should form a Council of Regency. This was what the Nizam, his people as well as the official class would like. To buttress his argument, Bayley added that it would "from the necessity of the position, force the boy to lean entirely on the Resident for support."⁶⁰

Clearly, here was a difference of opinion among the British official personnel. Bayley was supporting Salar Jung's son and the non-Mulki bureaucracy.⁶¹ Resident Jones preferred the Peshkar and the Shams-ul-Umra family, both belonging to the conservative section and backed by the Mulki faction. Foreign Secretary Grant, too, was inclined to the latter group, perhaps because the memory of the father's fighting spirit alienated the Foreign Office from the son. Grant upheld the claims of Khurshid Jah to be the chief administrator in Hyderabad during the Nizam's minority.⁶²

Bayley, therefore, proceeded to Hyderabad to confer with the Resident for a working arrangement which would be acceptable to all. Finally it was decided that the administration would be carried on by two joint administrators, the Peshkar as the senior and Laik Ali as the junior. A Council of Regency, to be presided over by the Nizam, was to be set up. Its members were to be Bashir-ud-daula, Khurshid Jah and the Peshkar, with Laik Ali as Secretary. The Council was to advise on all important matters which the administration might lay before it.⁶³

Ripon was pleased. "Bayley had done his work capitally", he said. And Kimberley, Harington's successor and a close friend of Ripon's, considered the arrangements to be extremely satisfactory.⁶⁴

But it was not a happy arrangement. A half-hearted compromise was merely sought between the differing interests in the state. And the compromise proved to be unworkable, as all such compromises are. The Peshkar, fond of power, "jealous" of Laik Ali, and "distrustful

of Laik Ali's advisers," denied him his proper share in the administration. Cordery, Jones' successor as Resident, supported the Peshkar, reminding Laik Ali that he was "subordinate" to his elder colleague. In actual fact, however, it was Khurshid Jah who was the real power in the state, the Peshkar having been "worn out", and Bashir-ud-daula being a man of no strong colour or character. Cordery did his best to concentrate power in Khurshid Jah's hands and to get rid of Clerk, Bilgrami and the Muslims from north India.⁶⁵ Hyderabad, in short, became a nest of intrigues.

Ripon decided to invest the Nizam with full powers as soon as he came of age. The question was, whom to choose as the *diwan*? Cordery went all out in favour of Khurshid Jah (though later he shifted his choice to the Peshkar).⁶⁶ The majority in Ripon's Council, presumably influenced by Cordery or the Foreign Office, also desired the appointment of Khurshid Jah. But Ripon, ably advised by Bayley, differed from them all.

The reasons are not hard to find. In the first place, Khurshid Jah was at the head of the retrograde party. Opposition to Salar Jung's policy was "an hereditary tradition" in his family. Salar Jung and the late Amir-i-Kabir, wrote Ripon, "represented two opposite policies and two opposite factions. These policies and these factions are now represented by their respective sons." The appointment of Khurshid Jah would mean a reversal of Ripon's policy of support to Salar Jung and his reforms. There was another, and this might well be Ripon's principal, consideration. Khurshid Jah was the chief of the Shams-ul-Umra family, the most powerful family in the state. "If to that power we add," wrote the Viceroy in his note, "all the authority of the diwanship, we shall run a very serious risk of making them dangerously strong." It would neither be good for the Nizam, nor would it be convenient to the paramount power to have too powerful a man within the domestic situation of Hyderabad.⁶⁷

But important as these considerations were, they were not the only ones in Ripon's mind. It will be unfair not to mention that the Liberal in him was convinced - in several private letters he stressed the point - that the Nizam should be given a free hand in the choice of the *diwan*. The constitutional principle was that the responsibility for the selection of the *diwan* rested upon the Nizam and the Government of India had no right to intervene, beyond giving advice. Ripon invited the Nizam to visit him in Calcutta. There at a private interview (at which the Viceroy was much impressed by the young Nizam) he gathered from the Nizam that he disliked Khurshid Jah and would like to have Laik Ali (with whom, incidentally, the Nizam had a close friendship) as the *diwan*. Under these circumstances, Ripon decided that in spite of his youth, which was no doubt a serious drawback, Laik Ali was "the best selection that can be made out of the lot from which we have to choose."⁶⁸

The Nizam's Installation

On 5th February, 1884, the Nizam was vested with full powers of administration at a gorgeous ceremony which was graced by Ripon's presence. Everything connected with the function went off "excellently". Ripon gave a warm and eloquent speech. Before the ceremony, he had another private interview with the Nizam who unreservedly reiterated his choice of Laik Ali. Accordingly, Laik Ali was given the diwanship.⁶⁹ The Nizam was jubilant, his people happy, and the non-Mulki bureaucracy triumphant. Secretary of State Kimberley, too, was approving. A difference of opinion with the Nizam on the subject of the appointment of his *diwan* would not have been worthwhile. It was hoped that the Nizam would prove to be a tolerantly good ruler and the new *diwan* a capable administrator.⁷⁰

The British alliance with the Salar Jung family was again restored. Not unnaturally, Ripon had thrown in his full weight in favour of the English-educated, westernised Laik Ali. He was the son of Salar Jung (was, in fact, Salar Jung II after his father's death), whom Ripon had chosen as his ally in preference to the conservative Shums-ul-Umra family. Moreover, since Laik Ali lacked strong backing at home - the Mulki faction opposed him - the necessity of his leaning on the Residency for support was apparent. With him and the Nizam (who was brought up by an English tutor) in power, it would be easy to westernise and modernise the state in true Gladstonian tradition. That the Nizam would be soon alienated from Laik Ali and that the *diwan* would become a puppet of the non-Mulki bureaucracy,⁷¹ Ripon could not have foreseen.

Conclusion

Ripon left India in 1884. On the eve of his departure, he must have congratulated himself on his Hyderabad politics. He had achieved what he had set out to do. He had re-established the understanding with Salar Jung, and that because the Minister was now a toothless, clawless tiger and posed no threat to the security of the Raj. His relations with Salar Jung were "most intimate and confidential", a necessary precondition for successfully operating the machinery of indirect rule. On Salar Jung's death, his pro-British son was installed to diwanship and a happy Nizam to administrative headship. At the same time the omnipotence of the paramount power was indisputably demonstrated. It is true that Ripon had preferred to leave the selection of the *diwan* to the Nizam, but then that was because the Nizam's choice coincided with his own. It could be confidently hoped that Hyderabad would toe the line and would be a source of strength to the Raj. The point is that

while Ripon expected full cooperation from the state, he offered no protection or advice either to Salar Jung or his successor, when help was needed against a set of sharp speculators and their middle-men.

At the end of all this discussion, one is left with a curious feeling of blankness. What in historical terms did the much-applauded Viceroy contribute towards Hyderabad? He developed no new strategy, he struck no novel path. He merely followed the procedure set by Canning, Lawrence, Northbrook and, to some extent, even Lytton. His distinctive contribution for what it was worth lay only in a shift of the power-axis in the personnel of the Hyderabad Government.

Given this overview, the more important question that emerges is, could Ripon be any different? In the given circumstances he was in, could he really do what he did not? Be the innovator of a novel attitude, the harbinger of a fresh breakthrough? Was it feasible for him to identify himself with Hyderabad's interests, give her more autonomy, or restore Berar? The imperial needs of a strategic railway could not be ignored, the nexus of the Empire with the cotton interest groups or the financial investment lobby could not be snapped. In analytical terms, the attitudes and moves of Ripon in Hyderabad make manifest the fact that Liberalism was, in its real essence, and in the context of the age, a face of imperialism, no less than Conservatism was. To be sure, the terms Liberalism and Conservatism had some distinct connotations in Britain, but these are largely blurred in the imperial-colonial setting. The distinction between the two ideologies lay not in the concept of imperialism, but in its operative modes. There was merely a variation in emphasis on one or the other shade of the same mosaic, in rival concepts of foreign policy, on the issue of the relative freedom of the press, the tariff question and, in cases like that of Hyderabad, in the choice of the principal collaborator. Indeed, the theme and pattern of imperialism had been organised, the contour devised by forces and factors beyond the control of Lytton and Ripon, or the Liberals and the Conservatives for that matter. Imperialism was in the late nineteenth century "something given",⁷² and the concept of paramountcy was firmly entrenched in the thinking of contemporary people. It was taken for granted that the paramount power would run the affairs of Hyderabad, act at will and take advantage of anything that could be made to further its own interest. Why else have paramountcy at all? Conditioned by his kind of imperial ideology, termed liberalism, and his pride in the image of the empire, Ripon could bring alterations only in the periphery of Lytton's Hyderabad policy. He changed the principal collaborator, reaped the harvest from the new alliance and when the circumstances so dictated, sacrificed the welfare of the ally for what he had promised to fight against, "the selfish and narrow objects of our own." Such was the contradiction in the declared imperial mission and imperial behaviour.

- 31 Foreign Secretary to Resident, 22nd March 1869, Foreign Political : A Proceedings, March 1869, No. 284. This document enshrined Mayo's concept of westernising Indian princes which Mayo later developed with greater sophistication and finesse.
- 32 "I shall take care," Salar Jung had declared, "to insist on my right to nominate the tutor and not accept any officer appointed by the British Government." Draft of letter, Salar Jung to Palmer, 11th August 1873, Salar Jung Papers (State Archives, Andhra Pradesh).
- 33 Meade to Lytton, 8th September 1877, Lytton Paper, reel 13. Meade often interfered with Clerk regarding the Nizam's education. Meade to Claude Clerk, 9th March & 19th October 1877, 15th January 1878, 11th February 1879, Clerk Papers, MSS. Eur. D 538/14.
- 34 Resident to Foreign Secretary, 20th August 1881 & Foreign Secretary to Resident, 9th January 1882, Foreign Political : A Proceedings, February 1882, Nos. 460 & 464.
- 35 For a discussion of the opium policy of the British, see M. Greenberg, *British Trade and the Opening of China, 1880-1842* (Cambridge, 1951), K. N. Chaudhuri (ed.), *The Economic Development of India under the East India Company, 1814-1858* (Cambridge, 1971) & John Strachey & Richard Strachey, *The Finance and Public Works of India from 1869 to 1881* (London, 1882), Chapter 14.
- 36 Resolution by Finance and Commerce Department, 19th July 1879, Foreign Political : A Proceedings, March 1880, No. 579.
- 37 Resident to Foreign Secretary, 11th February, 1881, Foreign Political : A Proceedings, January 1882, No. 147; Opium Rules Issued by the Nizam's Government, Foreign Political : B Proceedings, July 1882, No. 82. A formal memorandum of agreement between the two Governments was concluded after Salar Jung's death. See Aitchison, *op.cit.*, pp. 131-32.
- 38 Se Bharati Ray, "The Genesis of Railway Development in Hyderabad State : A Case Study in Nineteenth Century British Imperialism," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* (1984), Vol. I.
- 39 For terms of the agreement, see Aitchison, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-13. Hyderabad was saddled with a railway oriented to the satisfaction of British military needs, and yet entirely paid for by the State.
- 40 V. K. Bawa, "Salar Jung and the Nizam's State Railway, 1860-1883," *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* (1965), Vol. II, No. 4, p. 324.
- 41 Salisbury to Northbrook, 4th June 1875, Salisbury Papers (microfilm copy, NAI), reel 7.
- 42 The Singaneni coal-field was discovered by W. King, Dy. Superintendent of Geological Survey of India. For his interesting report on the coalfield, see Foreign General : A Proceedings, September 1874, K.W., Nos. 202-204.

- 43 Apart from giving an access to an unlimited supply of cheap fuel, the projected extension had the added advantage that the large coal-traffic for the G.I.P. Railway and the South Indian Railway would transform the Hyderabad railway, which was unremunerative, into a paying one.
- 44 Salisbury to Lytton, 16th February & 11th May 1877 and Lytton to Salisbury, 4th, 10th & 18th June, 1877, Lytton Papers (microfilm copy, NAI), reels 4 & 6. Lytton's Council took the decision under Meade's advice. Meade had warned that Salar Jung would use the subscription in Britain to reopen the Berar question.
- 45 Abdul Hak's report to Salar Jung, 7th November 1881 & C.A. Winter to Salar Jung, 1st November 1881, Foreign Political : A Proceedings, February 1882, Nos. 250 & 254. It may be pointed out here that Abdul Hak had arranged to get £ 120,000 for the railway and 1/4th the interest in the mining concession. Winter's evidence before Selection Committee, pp. 327 of 1888, p. 69.
- 46 Note by Bayley, 26th December, 1881, Foreign Political : A Proceedings, February 1882, K. W. Nos. 248-81.
- 47 Note by C. Grant, 9th January 1882, *ibid.*
- 48 Ripon to Hartington, 27th January, 1882, Ripon Papers, BP 7/3, Vol. 3.
- 49 Confidential memorandum by Abdul Hak, 1st October 1882, Foreign Secret : I Proceedings, May 1883, No. 1.
- 50 Hartington to Ripon, 12 & 27 October, 1882, *ibid.*, Add. MSS. 43569. A contemporary observer notes that, on asking what had made the home government press the railway scheme, he was told that "it was the Baring interest." W.S.Blunt, *India under Ripon : A Private Diary* (London, 1909), p. 205. There is no material evidence to support this. One may note that Northbrook of the Baring family was a close friend of Hartington's and a member of Gladstone's cabinet at the time, and that Evelyn Baring was Northbrook's cousin.
- 51 See Mahdi Ali (compiled), *Hyderabad Affairs* (Bombay, 1883-9), Supplementary Volume, p. 703.
- 52 Proposal of Morton, Rose and Company, 10th November 1882, Foreign Secret : I Proceedings, May 1883, No. 1.
- 53 The terms of the proposal were telegraphed to Bayley by O.T. Burne. Bayley to Ripon, 10th October 1882, Ripon Papers, Add. MSS. 43612 & Ripon to Bayley, 10th October 1882, *ibid.*, BP 7/6, Vol. 2.
- 54 The Mining proposal of 7th November 1882, Foreign Secret : I. Proceedings, May 1883, No. 1.

- 55 A company, called the Hyderabad Deccan Company limited, was registered on 28th July 1886. It acquired the mining rights from the concessionaires. The subsequent scandalous operations in the London stock exchange led to the formation of a Select Committee of Parliament to enquire into the matter and the whole story of their fraudulent scheme came out. See *First and Second Reports of Select Committee on East India (Hyderabad Deccan Mining Company)*, 17th May & 6th August 1888, pp. 177 & 327 of 1888. The Select Committee commended that "if more effective and direct British assistance and advice had been given to the Government of Hyderabad, the events that have occurred could not have taken place." *Ibid.*, p. 16.
- 56 Watson, it may be pointed out, was also a promoter of the mining scheme (accepted by Salar Jung), a fact that perhaps underlines the secret understanding and underhand financial deal between Abdul Hak and Watson, later highlighted by official investigation.
- 57 Cordery reported to Ripon that the scheme was sound. Cordery to Ripon, 2nd & 4th December 1883, Ripon Papers, Add. MSS. 43613. How Cordery forced the Council of Regency to accept the scheme is described in Mahdi Ali, *op. cit.*, pp. 468-510. Blunt says that the scheme was so ruthlessly pushed by Cordery that it is impossible to believe he was working without orders. W.S. Blunt, *op. cit.*, p. 205. Blunt appears to blame the Foreign Office.
- 58 Aitchison, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-150.
- 59 M. Fathulla Khan, *A History of Administrative Reform in Hyderabad State* (Secunderabad, 1935), p. 74.
- 60 Bayley to Grant & Grant to Ripon, 11th February 1883, Ripon Papers, Add. MSS. 43604.
- 61 Bayley mentioned that officials like Mahdi Ali and Syed Hossain Bilgrami were all backing Laik Ali, Bayley to Grant, *Ibid.*
- 62 Grant to Ripon, 11th February 1883, *Ibid.*
- 63 Bayley to Foreign Secretary, 22nd February 1883, Foreign Secret : I Proceedings, April 1883, No. 29. In this official letter Bayley seems to have changed his view, presumably to make an arrangement acceptable to all. He advised against the appointment of Laik Ali as the *diwan*. Gopal is wrong in saying that Laik Ali was at the time appointed as Minister. S. Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 211.
- 64 Ripon to Kimberley, 5th March 1883, Ripon papers, BP 7/3, Vol. IV & Kimberly to Ripon, 9th March & 20th April 1883, *Ibid.*, Add. MSS. 43523.
- 65 Bayley to Ripon, 11th & 25th December, *Ibid.*, Add. MSS. 43613 & Cordery to Ripon, 2nd December 1883, *Ibid.*, Add. MSS. 43612.
- 66 Cordery to Ripon, 19th & 30th January 1884, *Ibid.*

- 67 Note by Viceroy, 8th January 1884, *Ibid.*, BP 7/3, Vol. I, Gopal ignores the alliance of Cordery with Khurshed Jah and attributes the selection of Laik Ali to his youth. "While youth was at the helm, the steering could be done from Simla." S. Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 212. Ripon, however, clearly says that Laik Ali's youth was a "serious drawback." It was not his youth but the logic of his situation that would, it was hoped, inevitably foster his alliance with the British.
- 68 Ripon to Bayley, 8th January 1884, Ripon Papers, BP 7/6, Vol. I & Ripon to Kimberley, 15th January 1884, *Ibid.*, BP 7/3, Vol. V.
- 69 Ripon to Kimberley, 6th February & to Bayley, 5th February, 1884, *Ibid.*
- 70 Kimberley to Ripon, 15th & 16th November 1883 & 8th February, 1884, *Ibid.* Add. MSS. 43524.
- 71 The friendship between the *diwan* and his master, noted a contemporary, was "too youthful and too warm" to be "a permanent tie." Besides the intrigues of the nobles of the old order as well as those of the bureaucracy fomented the differences between them. Laik Ali had to resign in 1887. Din Shah Ardeshir Teleyarkhan, *The Jubilee Dawn in Nizam's Hyderabad, 1887* (Bombay, 1887), pp. 10-13.
- 72 A. P. Thornton, *Imperialism in the Twentieth Century* (London, 1978), p. 29.



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REVIEW ARTICLE

IMPERIAL DELHI

Suhash Chakravarty

Review of *INDIAN SUMMER : LUTYENS, BAKER AND IMPERIAL DELHI*. By Robert Grant Irving, Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1981; 406 pp.

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From

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Pretoria, Canberra and New Delhi, commanding the three outposts of the British empire, denote three distinct phases in the evolution of imperial architecture. Pretoria reflects the architectural endeavour of a closed community which sought to retain a strange racial aloofness. It created an unstable hegemony by an interesting manipulation of a Dutch tradition and the natural surroundings of a rugged surface and by invoking the spirit of the Roman empire. Canberra, a safe colonial settlement of white people, is a simple spiderweb pattern. Considerations of hygiene, communications and security rather than of traditions or cultural legacy, were foremost in the imagination of the contemporary administration or of its architects. New Delhi stood on a different pedestal altogether. Here a small white community, ruling over a vast eastern continent, seemed somewhat impatient to park its metropolis amidst a stable, conservative and obedient public opinion in North India, away from the noisy and clamorous pleaders of Calcutta. Evidently, the new city did not grow : it was manufactured even at the cost of a thriving Shahjahanabad still glowing in its tropical sunset. A circumspect viceroy, weary of the endemic bomb cult of Bengal, and a secretary of state, overwhelmed by the uneasy detachment of London, were determined to annex for Delhi "the coloured and theatrical facade of Islam" and the "purest and simplest Hindu ornaments" and to fuse them into "a more intellectual three-dimensional tradition of solid form and exact proportions - the tradition of Europe". It was designed to be more than a mere promiscuous exercise. "To the races of India", Crew advocated, "for whom the legends and records of the past are charged with so intense a meaning, the resumption by the paramount power of the seat of venerable Empire should at once enforce the continuity and promise the permanency of the British sovereign rule over the length and breadth of the country." The poet in Lytton had dreamt of it way back in 1870s. The grandiose imperial scheme of Curzon encompassed it. Hardinge sought to concretise that mission. In visual effect, sentimental importance, imperial eminence and sheer magnitude New Delhi of Lutyens was to surpass both Pretoria and Canberra.

In this densely documented work, based on official and private papers, the story of New Delhi unfolds itself from the day of the announcement at the Durbar of 1911 by the King-Emperor of the decision to transfer the capital from a dissonant Calcutta to a muffled Delhi surrounded by conservative public opinion. That pronouncement evoked mixed response. The unpartition of Bengal comforted the wounded *amour-propre* of the Bengalis and bolstered the flagging resolution of the moderates; it prodded both a brilliant Curzon and a stolid Minto onto vitriolic indictments; it pricked the inflated spirits of the Nawab of Dacca who succumbed like a sunken balloon. The European Chamber of Commerce was apprehensive of a possible waning of its extra-constitutional authority and it became willy-nilly Calcutta's most prized gramophone.

The book has a fairly detailed account of the evolution of the city's conception, planning and growth. The architectural scrutiny of the layout and the buildings and an exposition of a 'noble' imperial dream have been woven into a striking pattern. The text is replete with profuse references from private papers of the architects, town-planners, viceroys, secretaries of state, administrators and politicians and from diverse contemporary impressions in learned and popular journals. As a result, its range is fairly extensive and its texture impressive. The rejection of the northern site, the Talkatora and the Malcha, the search for a principal focal point, the development of the idea and the reality of an *acropolis* on the Raisina hills, the overriding consideration for adopting the Jama Masjid and the Indraprastha as permanent backdrops of the two processional highways, the battle for styles, the elevation of the secretariats on the slopes of the capitol-complex and the history of the gradient controversy have been worked out with the precision of an architect, the perspective of a historian and the imagination of an artist. Splendid reproductions of the pencil sketches by the architects, their initial drafts, the romantic drawings in water colour and the superb photographs add to the irresistible elegance of the production. The result is a sumptuous feast both for the eye and for the intellect.

As one comes to the concluding pages of the book four images stand out prominently. First is that of a subtle diplomat with a fervid urge to be acclaimed by posterity as the creator of the most significant monument of the empire. It appears as if he was goaded by a transcendental vision to erect a second Shahjahanabad on the bank of the Jumna superior to the first both in conception and execution. The architects fought intensely among themselves with regard to its planning and design. Islington and MacDonald polemicised. Raisina village and over the ruins of monuments of forgotten glories acquiesced with a sense of participation in an imperial undertaking. There were moments of uncertainty, hesitation and circumspection. The enormity of the project, its almost unmanageable financial

implications, the ascendancy of the revolutionary movement, a bomb-assault on the viceroy during his triumphant entry into the imperial capital and the tedious drift of the World War I caused regrettable revisions in the proposed lay-out and some unhappy reductions in imperial dimensions. Completion of the work was delayed; large areas of constructions were left untouched and a determined opposition was sparked off against the project all along the periods of its infancy and adolescence. And yet Hardinge and his successors were determined to plod and prod and the city toddled along.

The second image is that of Edwin Landseer Lutyens. By the time he arrived in India a 'Lutyens house' had begun to mean something. It was generally assumed that he was about to be recognised as the Pontifex Maximus and Architect Laureate of the British empire. Following the traditions of Butterfield and Philip Webb, Lutyens upheld the primacy of mathematically proportioned forms over sentiments and poetry. He held fast to the standards of arts and values as conceptualised by John Ruskin. A living architecture, he believed, ought to be more than an imitated style. Rationality involved, according to him, a sense of order and priority, a controlled discipline and a bold simplicity of form. It operated, he argued, against impulsive and accidental decisions.

Lutyens was shocked by the "monotonous riot of nonsense" in Indian architecture. Amber failed him. Mandu disappointed him. Agra and even the Taj teased him. The ornate curves of Indian architecture and the two dimensional perspective of Indian sculpture "shocked his western sense of Truth". "When they build", he wrote, contemptuously dismissing the impressive achievements of Indian architecture, "it is exactly like children's brick". If the desired effect was to be achieved, Lutyens derided, it ought to have been accompanied by "Tom Tom music!" The Indian bureaucracy shocked him by its utter "tastelessness". He was appalled by the British architectural compositions of Simla. Hardinge's plea for an Anglo-Indian style for Delhi was considered by him as a morbid bathos and he did not hesitate spending several working hours to convince his obdurate client that a pointed dome was repugnant with viceregal dignity. The Central Square of the new Hampstead suburb had already anticipated a large conception. In India, Lutyens' genius was tempered and mellowed. The result was an impressive palace - large, arrogant and yet lovely. Its climax is the extra-ordinary dome rising suddenly from the middle of the house. The principles of lines, proportion and mass were fused with local traditions - the Buddhist railings of Sanchi and the Pathan compositions at Mandu. That fusion did not alter the character of the building. It remained distinct, imperial and a "monumental affirmation of temporal power" registering a slap on the face of nationalist India. It created all the same the impressions of the simple perspective of a Doric temple. There

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was no attempt to storm the heaven and there was no effort to defy the laws of gravity. Instead, it reflected the sonorous balance and a sense of harmony with the universe. The **parthenon** of New Delhi's **acropolis** echoed an Athenian tradition as it was placed judiciously to welcome the rising sun every morning.

Lutyens's collaborator, Herbert Baker, is the primate of Irving's New Delhi and the **propylaea** of the Raisina was the **prie-dieu** of Baker's imperial church. In South Africa he had already taken advantage of the existing Dutch traditions to produce a matured colonial model. The memorial that he constructed to Cecil Rhodes across the rugged slopes of the Table Mountain near Cape Town sought to recreate an isolated Greek temple of Segesta. It was the beginning of his imperial expression. He was successful in introducing in the governmental buildings in Pretoria a sense of dignified aloofness and stern grandeur reflecting the racial arrogance of a small ruling community. His paradigm was the Athenian **acropolis** and he was attracted by the architectural possibilities of an imposing **propylaea** along the contours of a rising surface. He lacked Lutyens's intensity and attachment for pure form. He was also less rigid than his collaborator in his devotion to precision, simplicity of lines and the beauty of the interplay of light and shadows. Theory came first and architecture was to reflect, Baker seemed to conceptualise, that theoretical proposition. It was not for him to deliberate whether a work mirrored all the rules, conventions and aesthetic demands of a true form. The political principle enshrined in the organic unity of a universal empire, envisaged by Milner, had a significant impact on his eclectic mind.

For Baker, schooled as he was under Milner and Rhodes, architecture was an apparel of politics. He determined a political principle in theory and then turned to his drawing board. British rule, according to him, was the culmination of India's historical destiny. It had already produced order, unity and law. It needed permanence and legitimacy. He was, therefore, keen to represent the viceroy's house as the **parthenon** on the **acropolis** reflecting the divinity of Zillulah. It was somewhat obscured by the dominant secretariat, the **propylaea**. This Athenian complex in its Indian setting offered Baker the architectural blueprint of an envigorated British empire. Aply supported by the members of Milner's 'kindergarten', then perambulating all over India bringing order out of disorder, Baker erected with humourless sincerity what appeared to Lutyens a well-hatched plot to overshadow his supreme architectural achievement. In conformity with his political speculations Baker pleaded that the remote aloofness of the government house affirmed a desirable and noble principle. It invested, he argued, the dignified viceregal authority with an element of divine mystique. But he could not meet Lutyens's trenchant technical arguments. For two decades Lutyens grumbled, protested and petitioned to authorities. Experts sympathised with him but a succession of viceroys encouraged, backed and confirmed Baker.

Lutyens loathed Indian forms and compositions : but he was cajoled by a determined viceroy to add in his plan elements of Indian ornaments. Baker shared Lutyens's contempt for eastern art. His adoption of western classicism in Delhi was, however, largely motivated by his conviction that politically it was more suitable to illustrate the triumph of law and order. His employment of spacious colonnades, opened verandahs, overhanging eaves, small high window openings, the **jalis** or pierced stone lattice screens and **chhatris** or free-standing pavilions breaking the long horizontal lines was a patronising and arrogant gesture from his imperial platform.

It is surprising that Irving does not find in the collection of Lutyens those very papers where he offered to pay from his own purse the enormous sum required for the necessary architectural surgery. It would have revived, he thought, the balance and symmetry as originally designed for the **acropolis**. Architecturally, the controversy over the height and crest of the gradient was weighty and the decision on the issue was momentous. The processional way leading towards the viceregal house gets lost in a granite wall while the dome of the palace sinks under the crest of the gradient. This, as Lutyens maintained, signified the suffocating death of a pure idea and of a true form. Politically, the controversy was, however, merely pooh-poohed by Baker and his associates as tweedledum and tweedledee. The gradient served Baker to steal the limelight. The ascendancy of the secretariats to a commanding position was designed to nurse the insatiable desire of the ICS to be hailed and honoured as the hallowed custodian of the Raj. The installation of the residence of the C-in-C on the right flank of the viceroy's house was a standing reminder that it was brute force that underlined civil authority. Besides, the four distinct cathedrals in a small horizontal Indian city concretised the claim that British rule in India was also the political expression of a Christian civilisation.

And now the city itself. There is no mention in the present work of the impact of the industrial revolution on the science of town-planning. Baron Haussmann gets a casual reference. His regularisation process and its impact, the growth and multiple functions of spider-web and checkerboard plans have been quietly ignored. Washington, Canberra and Pretoria have been discussed. But the logical interconnections of the focal points of these cities with their distinct poles, nodes and the communication links and the significance of the cult of streets have been avoided altogether. The result is a dull narration punctuated by forced poetry. In this sense, the book represents the city faithfully.

Howard's conception of a green city superimposed on a horizontal plan based on straight roads and standardised height of the buildings coupled with stratified residential sectors and overlooked by an awe-inspiring **acropolis** was not designed to create a democratic culture. They might have inspired the poet in Irving to appreciate

this delicate actualisation of a 'noble imperial idealism'. But no contemporary - not even Hardinge, Swinton, Brodie, Lutyens, Baker, Butler, Hailey or Lanchester - was oblivious of the essential point. The schematic layout was evolved to regulate the disordered city of Delhi and to disentangle the British outpost on the south from the dross and sediments of Delhi's past and present while retaining an optical illusion of unity with the old. The acropolis, the wide straight processional ways, the central vista connecting the secretarial blocks, viceregal palace and the cathedral, the seclusion of the necessary undesirables of the city in the *baboo* quarters, the vast squares of the official facades, the diagonal avenues, the bungalows of the white *sahibs* dotting acres of green grass and the strange buffer of 'fat Indians' in the Princes Park provided the "ceremonial furnitures" of the imperial city. It separated the rulers and the ruled by a permanent picture frame stage. A remote, awful and majestic pomp was designed to confront an admiring and applauding audience for ever.

The result was astounding and Irving is somewhat indifferent to the monumental social deformities emanating from the creation of a snooty official Delhi. There has been ever since a curious and piquant sense of unreality. The life in the exclusive clubs, where 'no native need apply', was more than artificial and there was nothing in this spider-web pattern that reminded one that the locale was in India. Official India was a promiscuous throng of horse carriages, turbaned chiefs, military uniforms, elaborate ceremonials, frock-coats and top hats. It was a spectacle of stunning aloofness, impressive march-pasts, glittering costumes and conspicuous bungalows. Its life was distinguished by gloomy forebodings over the changed manners, forced oriental subordination, infectious suspicions, mysterious affectations and uncanny secrecy. The overpowering social atmosphere of an official Delhi was overweening. It was, it was openly advertised, but a natural product of the interaction between a rational Western mind with the lurid customs of a spooky land full of snakes, cholera, various forms of inhuman superstitions and, of course, the *babus*. The civil lines, cantonments, the *Sadr* and a *labazar*, on the vicinity of native cities, provided the physical expressions of a secluded Raj, itself sharply stratified between the civil and military services, the subalterns and the Tommy Atkins. The hill-station represented, the illusion of an English spring superimposed on an Indian summer. The exclusive clubs were the artificial indulgence in imperial fantasy. New Delhi expressed the most extravagant continues to persist even to-day.

Patric Geddes lambasted the plan on these scores. In the course of fifteen reports on the Indian towns, Geddes repeatedly urged for simplicity and pleaded for a generous dose of humility and reverence in dealing with human dwellings and social sentiments and implored for an organic continuity in town planning. He waged

an indefatigable war against those who were trying to impose the western cult of streets on the defenceless cities of the British empire and against the "death-dealing Haussmannism" of the "callous, contemptuous city bureaucrats of Delhi". Lutyens dismissed him as a crank. Geddes was irrelevant for New Delhi's planners. Two inconsequential references by Irving have reduced Geddes's views to naive innocence! Even Lanchester's reports, which sought to integrate the new city with the old and soften the fierce impact of a new cantonment hidden in a lush green garden and evoked some responsive echoes in the mind of Hardinge, have not been examined between the lines. The rejection of the northern site, blessed by the memories of three imperial *durbars*, has been defended according to the terms of reference of the town-planners' official report. Sir Bradford Leslie's much discussed proposal for the development of the river front has received an incidental treatment. There is no attempt whatsoever to discover the inert zones and the key zones in the city's composition.

Our author shares in full measure the belief held so dearly by the ICS and Baker that the Raj was a divine dispensation to evolve order, unity and discipline out of the Asiatic congeries collectively known as India. On this score, Irving has out-Bakered Baker himself. In search of this remarkable translation, political unity and stability in town-planning and architecture, Irving often becomes lyrical. He traces, for example, the evidence of this civilising endeavour in the very conception of the Mughal Gardens, in the compositions of the viceregal bed-chambers, in the strikingly simple design of the furniture, in the elegant execution of the commodes and chamber utensils, in the regal dome and even in the viceroy's personal garden where he retired every afternoon for a 'British' cup of tea away from the ruggedness of the shrubby ridge abruptly terminated by British ingenuity with an imperial oasis! The presence of the Mahatma in this garden as a 'naked fakir' in sharp contrast to the British aristocratic costumes of Lord Irwin has been brought into high relief to underline this self-righteous myth. The element of surprise so characteristic of Lutyens's compositions, the frequent interruption of monotony, the skilful use of vertical lines to offset the drabness of a horizontal building, the hesitant employment of Indian artisans and the failure to evolve an Indian style are gleefully recommended as irreproachable evidence of the imperial mission. There is no limit to this self indulgence. The austerity of the Great Place, Irving writes, provided an effective foil to the brilliant pomp of state rituals. Silhouetted against the *Rajpala* ramparts, the official ceremonials, the author claims, were but visible symbols of ordered restraints amidst exuberance. Even the mile-and-a-half King's Way embodied, the author professes, an image of disciplined action and "achievement", recalling Kipling's "Song of the English":

Keep ye the Law - be swift in all obedience - Clear the land of evil, drive the road and bridge the ford.

If Lutyen's mathematics was subsumed by Baker's sentiments and Geddes's humanism was buried under Lutyens's schematic lay-out, Irving's objectivity has been drowned in his own racy, riotous, romantic nostalgia of the Raj.

Suhash Chakravarty



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BOOK REVIEWS

FROM LINEAGE TO STATE : SOCIAL FORMATIONS IN THE MID-FIRST MILLENNIUM B.C. IN THE GANGA VALLEY. By Romila Thapar, Bombay : Oxford University Press, 1984, 200 pp., Rs.110.

This work is a detailed analytical study on the emergence of the state in India about the middle of the first millennium B.C. It marks the culmination of the studies on early Indian society that the author has been carrying on for nearly a decade now. Here she analyzes and interprets the early Indian literary and archaeological evidence relating to state formation using models derived from recent anthropological theories. But it is not a procrustean handling of the anthropological models. In the words of the author, "a certain degree of hopefully creative speculation has gone into this analysis."

According to the author the R̥g Vedic period presented a pre-state stage, the later Vedic period the transitional state, and only about the middle of the first millennium B.C. the state took a full shape. Considering the nomenclature 'tribal society' as too general and imprecise, the author calls the Vedic society as lineage-based system. In this kind of social formation the extended (here patriarchal) family based on three or four generation lineage was the basic unit of production. Lineage is defined as a corporate group of unilateral kin with a formalized system of authority. In the early or R̥g Vedic society viś, taken equivalent to clan, was a higher order unit consisting of a number of lineages claiming a common ancestor real or mythical. In this predominantly pastoral society there existed bifurcation within clans into senior lineages (rājanya) and junior lineages (denoted by the term viś itself), but the stratification was not clearly developed as to separate the former who were the ruling chiefs from the latter who were the ruled. The rājan or chief could not act arbitrarily without the consent of the viś on public matters. The territorial jurisdiction of each of the ruling lineage was only vaguely defined at this stage. The viś paid the chiefs tribute and prestations which were mostly redistributed as gifts and as dakṣiṇa to the brāhmaṇas who performed costly yajña rituals for the well-being of the community.

Only when the Vedic society shifted its geographic locale from the Panjab to the western Ganga valley (the Kuru-Pañcāla region), agriculture began to play a larger role in the economy and what is called the householding economy came into vogue. Under this changed system the household (whose head was called gr̥hapati) became the unit of agricultural production and began to claim permanent usage over the cultivated land, which led to the weakening of the clan control over the agricultural land. This was, however,

different from the latter peasant economy in that the family exercised rights over the land which it cultivated using mainly the family labour and only some supplementary śūdra/dāsa labour. There were no tenants and no regular rent or tax was paid to a higher authority. The terms *bali*, *bhāga* and *śulka* used in the context had not yet attained their latter connotation of taxes. At this stage developed a series of contrasting status stratification which were tried to be rationalized by the *varṇa* theory. The dual *varṇa* (*ārya* and *dāsa*) division developed into a four-fold division. The *ārya varṇa* got expanded into the three *dvija varṇas* i.e., the *brāhmaṇa*, the *kshatriya* and the *viś*. The ranking order between the *brāhmaṇa* and the *kshatriya* was ambivalent. The *viś* or *vaiśya* was more often included with the *śūdra* of the fourth *varṇa* and accorded a status lower to that of the first two *varṇas*. The notion of pollution, central to the question of ritual status, also cropped up at this juncture.

In the western Ganga valley the chiefs (*rāja* or *kshatriya*) attained important political status with concentration of powers in his hands and with the development of consciousness of territory. But the continuing practice of large-scale destruction of wealth in sacrificial rituals (which of course was done to enhance the status of the chiefs as well as that of the *brāhmaṇa* who performed them) placed severe limitations on these chiefdoms posing as an obstacle to the easy transition to a state system. The communities were smaller in size compared to those of the subsequent period as shown by the archaeological evidence. Also continual segmenting off of the lineages and their eastward migration to virgin agricultural tracts eased the tension that would arise due to demographic pressure and precluded the necessity of evolving a system of control through the state.

When the arena shifted further to the middle Ganga valley the situation was very different as attested more fully by the Buddhist literature and archaeological evidence. Expanding rice agriculture using irrigation sharpened stratification between the landowners (*grhapati/gahapati*) and the peasant cultivators (*śūdras*).

Here state emerged as the stratification became much more widespread both socially and geographically. In *Kośala* and *Magadha* full-fledged states appeared in the form of kingdoms. Along with these monarchical states, there also developed in certain ecological niches another political system which had only an inkling of state structure. This latter called the *gaṇa-saṅgha* system consisting of chiefdoms was a survival from the earlier lineage society. The major factors which brought about the transformation to the state system in the middle Ganga valley were: The rise of big landowners and merchants from among the (*vaiśya*) *grhapati* and the consequent appearance of peasants and artisans producing a complex stratification. Large-scale urbanization with attendant demographic problems.

Introduction of coinage in the economic system, development of usury and banking supported by the heretical religions, and long-distance trade. Taxation replacing prestation payments.

At this stage there are found expressed different theories of explanation for the origins of state both in the Brahmanic and Buddhist traditions. A complete definition of what constituted the state is first expressed in the *saptāṅga* theory of the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya.

The foregoing summary is inadequate to bring out either the richness of the detail or the profundity of the interpretation in the work. The work is significant not only for its clear delineation of the earliest states in India but also for providing a conceptual framework for analyzing the latter state systems that started appearing continuously in various regions of India through the centuries. To cite one instance, the lineage mode of production is found to linger on in various parts of South India until the late first millennium A.D. The author correctly emphasizes that the state once evolved, rather than becoming frozen, underwent substantial changes reflecting wider historical change. (Incidentally this fact disproves the colonial-period theories of static Indian society). The author has offered a new concept, that of the metropolitan state, to reconsider the nature of the Mauryan state usually considered a highly centralized empire. According to this concept, in the early empires, the metropolitan state, centred in the core region, would be organized on unitary, centralized basis whereas its control over the peripheral regions would be through central administration restricted to certain aspects. The state did not attempt to restructure the economy of the peripheral regions as to integrate them with the core region.

The *varṇa* theory, particularly the relation of *varṇa* to caste (*jāti*), is looked at a refreshingly new angle. It is stressed that the dynamic aspect of the *varṇa* system is usually forgotten in the writings on early Indian history. The gradations among the *varṇas* and within each of the *varṇas* were built on ritual as well as economic status. When lineage-based society gave place to state society, economic status gained more weight. Here the author poses a pertinent problem for further study.

'Historically it would be worthwhile to locate and identify the hierarchy of economic status as a parallel system and investigate whether at some points in history the two systems would either cohere or modify each other; or for that matter consider the possibility that in actual working of a caste society the role of varṇa is less important than has been made out so far.'

The analysis of changing relations of the earliest states with the contemporary religions, particularly Buddhism, is another interesting aspect which must set the pace to such considerations of state vis-a-vis religion during the latter centuries.

The general tone of the study is very sober. Even where the author confidently differs from earlier interpretations she does not involve herself in any polemics. That will make the study very endearing to all serious students of early Indian history. The book is certainly bound to create interest in the variety of concepts available in the current anthropological literature for enriching the study of varied socio-economic formations in Indian history that are taken note of seriously only during the recent decades.

Y. Subbarayalu

HOMAGE TO KARNATAKA. Ed. Saryu Doshi, Bombay : Marg Publications, 1982; 150 pp., Rs. 175.

This publication was intended to be a part of the celebration of the First World Kannada Conference. But the conference has been indefinitely postponed. Marg Publications have taken advantage of the festivals in India and abroad about India and have timed some of their issues to coincide with such celebrations. These productions are always a feast for both the eyes and the brain and have done a world of good for the lovers of Indian art and architecture and for the revival of our Fine Arts. The present publication divides its contents into Introduction, Art and Architecture, Decorative Arts and Performing Arts.

Introduction part contains articles on the land and the people of Karnataka, their history and its sources and Kannada literature. H. Y. Sharada Prasad in an extremely readable article about the land and the people points out the salient features of Karnataka geography, its language, literature and art and the qualities of its people and their contributions to religion and philosophy and the attractions the region has for the tourists.

S. H. Ritti and G. S. Dikshit in "From the Past to the Present" trace the efforts of the rulers and the people in developing their language, art and architecture in pre-Vijayanagara times and the fight they put up against foreign invaders and the efforts they made to preserve their lost culture under Vijayanagara. Mysore under Hyder and Tipu was one of the first to oppose the British though unsuccessfully. Later when the whole country came under British rule, Mysore benefited by association with them and under the Dewans Visweswaraya and Mirza Ismail became a model state. In 1956, it became a linguistic state in Independent India.

M. V. Seetha Ramiah traces the literary trends in Kannada. Jainism, Veerashaivism and Vaishnavism have enriched Kannada literature which has a continuous history of over one thousand and one hundred years, beginning with Nripatunga's *Kavirajamarga* [C.850 A.D.] and containing such illustrious names as Pampa, Basaveshwara and Kumara Vyasa. The influence of western thought and the introduction of English education have brought about a renaissance in Kannada literature. Karnataka has produced four Jnanapith award winners in Bendre, Puttappa, Karanth and Masti.

K. V. Ramesh in "Engravings on Stone" gives an account of the wealth of historical records not only on stone but also on copper. The earliest of such records are those of Asoka. They are in Brahmi characters from which in course of time the vernacular Kannada script like all other Indian scripts was gradually evolved. The Halmidi inscription [mid fifth century A.D.] is the earliest inscription in Kannada. The most famous inscriptions in Sanskrit are the Talgunda inscription of Kadamba Kakustha-varman [fifth century A.D.] and the Aihole inscription of Pulakeshi II [634-5 A.D.]. Both for their contents and their style they are of all India importance.

Articles in Art and Architecture section study the contributions to art and architecture made by the followers of the different religions. S. Nagaraju gives pride of place among the "Vestiges of Buddhist Art" to those at Sannati in Gulbarga district. They belong to the Amaravati school so far as style is concerned, but they differ from that school in depicting dress and ornaments which are similar to those at Mathura and Begram.

Saryu Doshi and A. Sundara have described the "Jaina Centres of Worship". While Sravana Belgola with its Gommata colossus occupies the central place and belongs to the Ganga and Hoysala ages, Humcha [pre-Vijayanagara] and Moodbidri [Vijayanagara] deserve attention for the artistic excellence of their monuments.

"The Hindu Heritage of Karnataka" sketched by L. K. Srinivasan is the largest. It belongs to all ages. Badami, Pattadakal and Aihole are the birth places of our temple architecture and sculpture. The Kalyani Chalukyas and Hoysalas contributed to their growth and evolved a distinct school which has made Karnataka famous throughout India and abroad; Vijayanagara and its successors, the Nayakas and Wodeyars, continued this tradition and have brought it to our own days.

The "Islamic Legacy" is assessed by Catherine B. Asher. She considers that the three centres where this legacy is best studied are Gulbarga, Bidar and Bijapur. Of these, the Ibrahim Rauza and Gol Gumbad in Bijapur, enjoy almost as much acclaim as Taj Mahal and Fatehpur Sikri. She also thinks that the Bijapur monuments influenced the British concept of how modern architecture in India

ought to look and played a major role in the formation of the British created Indo-Saracenic style of architecture.

In "Monuments of Tipu Sultan", Radhika Sabavala describes Tipu's Summer palace, the Darya Daulat - the wealth of the sea - and Gumbaz, the mausoleum of Haidar and Tipu Sultan.

While the history of architecture and sculpture in Karnataka is continuous, the history of painting in Karnataka has, according to B.V.K. Sastry, large gaps. After its start in the caves of Badami under the Early Chalukyas, we have to wait till the Vijayanagara period to see the next examples of painting. Thereafter, however, there is continuity. The examples of the Vijayanagara school are seen in Karnataka: in Hampi, Hiriyur and Mudukthore. In early nineteenth century, Sravana Belgola, Nippani and Nargund produced paintings of some merit. But the best examples of this period are found in the manuscript *Sri Tatvanidhi*, attributed to Krishnaraja III, which contains over 1000 paintings. After a setback, there is a renaissance in painting in Karnataka, started by K. Venkatappa.

The decorative arts included in this work are carvings in wood and ivory and embroidery. In "Expressions in Wood and Ivory", S. R. Rao says that Karnataka has been famous for the carvings in sandal wood, rose wood and ivory. He makes particular mention of the beautiful ceiling panels of the Parvati temple at Keladi in Shimoga district and the wood carvings of the Ramachandrapur matha in the same district. The Gudigars or sculptors in wood, prominent in Shimoga and Uttara Kannada districts, even now follow the *dhyana slokas* as well as the great models of the Hoysala and Vijayanagara schools.

Shanti K. Shah in "Tracery in Thread" describes the Kasuti or embroidery work of Karnataka which along with the Chikankari of U.P., the Kantha of Bengal, the Phulkari of the Punjab and the Abhala of Kutch and Saurashtra is a prime example of Indian embroidery. The Kasuti workers have been influenced by the temple sculptures as seen in the use of their motifs like the *gopuras*, the *pushkaras* and *dipasthambhas*. This embroidery became defunct due to lack of encouragement. Its revival in our own days is due to Indira Joshi [wife of the historian P. M. Joshi] who brought this dying industry to the notice of the public by her epoch-making work *Kasuti of Karnataka*, and Hukeri Rama Rao, a Gandhian social worker, who started a school in Dharwad for its promotion.

The performing arts included here are music, yakshagana, theatre, cinema and puppetry. B. V. K. Sastry in 'Music' says that while other states favour either the Hindustani or Carnatic music, both flourish in Karnataka side by side. A good number of authoritative texts on music were either produced in Karnataka or written by authors of Karnataka origin settled in other states of India. Among these, Pundarika Vithala is specially mentioned.

from Karnataka, he travelled north where he was patronised by Akbar the Great. He is the only author who discusses the music of both the North and the South. The Mysore Wodeyars patronised both Hindustani and Carnatic styles. Alladia Khan and Abdul Karim Khan who settled in Kolhapur and Miraj on the borders of Karnataka helped to replace Carnatic music with the Hindustani type in North Karnataka.

K. S. Haridas Bhat in "Yakshagana" gives credit to Shivaram Karanth for the revival of this folk art. Though highly localised in Dakshina and Uttara Kannada districts, it is very much a part of the universal theatre and has acquired a place of honour among the best theatre forms of the world.

B. Chandrasekhara in "Theatre" thinks that in recent years Kannada theatre has kept abreast of the front-line theatres in Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati and Bengali languages. The traditional theatre like the professional theatre has fallen on evil days. The Janapada and Yakshagana Academy is established to put new life into them. The best days of the professional theatre were from 1900 to 1935 when giants like A. V. Varadachar, Gubbi Veeranna, Garud Sadashiva Rao and Gangubai Guledgud flourished. The amateur movement led by Kailasam and Sriranga began in the thirties. Since then, it has been strengthened by Girish Karnad, B. V. Karanth, Chandrasekhara Kambar and Chandrasekhar Patil and the students of the National School of Drama and the University Departments in Bangalore and Mysore.

The progress of cinema in Karnataka is outlined by G. S. Sadashiva. Karnataka is just now celebrating the Golden Jubilee of this art. It started with a bang with the production of *Vasantasena* in the thirties. The history of cinema in Karnataka, so far as commercial films are concerned, is not different from that in other parts of India. But there was a New Wave Movement beginning with *Samskara* and including *Vamsavriksha*, *Pallavi*, *Ghatasradha*, *Savitri* and *Chomana dudi* - all award-winning films. The New Wave has spent itself, though occasionally we have films like *Phaniyamma*, directed by the only woman director in Karnataka viz., Prema Karanth, and *Shankaracharya* in Sanskrit directed by G. V. Iyer.

The shadow play or puppet show with leather figures is another example of folk art. M. S. Nanjunda Rao deals with it in "Leather Puppets" and traces its history from the twelfth century as it is mentioned in *Panditaradhyaya charita* of Palkurike Somanatha. At the moment, the art is in a dying condition. The technique of making these puppets reveals wonderful imagination and skill giving life to leather. The Karnataka Chitrakala Parishat of which Nanjunda Rao is the life and soul has a collection of thousands of leather puppets which can enable a student to study this art. Besides, the Parishat is in touch with the few hundred families engaged in this profession.

In keeping with the tradition of *Marg*, *Homage to Karnataka* highlights the best examples of art and architecture of the past and drama and cinema of the present and does yeomen service for keeping alive the folk arts like kasuti, yakshagana, wood carving and puppetry.

G. S. Dikshit

MODERN INDIA : THE ORIGINS OF AN ASIAN DEMOCRACY. By Judith M. Brown, Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1983, xiv + 421 pp., Rs. 140.

Anything that Judith Brown writes is worth reading. Her two books covering Gandhi's political activity in India from 1915 to 1934 provided new insights; and now she has taken on the difficult task of providing, in a short compass, for the series of the Short Oxford History of the Modern World, a history of India during the last three hundred years. Even a purely political history would, on this scale, turn out to be summary; but Brown's work is more ambitious. Starting with a survey of Indian society, ideas and institutions, she seeks to trace the interaction between India and Britain rather than the impact of British rule on what many have assumed to be a traditional and passive society. She emphasizes continuity rather than change, and rightly working on the premises that the democratic system is free India's prime achievement, sets out to trace the roots of democracy in the development of institutions and fresh forms of political behaviour which draw their sustenance from existing Indian ways, ideas derived from the West and the consequences, intended and unanticipated, of imperialism.

Brown writes with sympathy and concern for India, is familiar with the sources and takes in social and economic trends as well as pure politics. It is an attempt at total history but at the policy rather than the popular level. She is partial to the methodology of the Cambridge school although unwilling to accept all their conclusions. She avoids simplistic and monocausal explanations and prefers to state all views without firmly committing herself to any one of them. Covering so much ground in relatively so short a space necessarily results in a variety of generalizations with all of which all her readers will not agree. Did the Minto regime have little to do with the deputation led by the Aga Khan; and is there no evidence that the British encouraged the demand for Pakistan as a measure to divide Indians so deeply that they could maintain their raj? Nor will there be unanimous agreement with the view that the British were always serious about devolving power on an increasingly democratic basis. But to raise these questions is to show that Brown's book serves its purpose of stirring thought. Though intended primarily for non-Indian students, it will no doubt be widely used in India.

SUGARCANE AND SUGAR IN GORAKHPUR. By Shahid Amin, Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1984, 360 pp., Rs. 140.

The peasantry, when they feature in Indian economic history, often appear as flat, one-dimensional figures, devoid of historical depth or specificity. As Shahid Amin points out, the specific traits of small-peasant production have often been lost to sight, and attention exclusively focussed on the interaction between the peasant and the outside world. Amin seeks instead to relate these external relationships to the internal dynamic of peasant production itself; or, as he puts it to comprehend the significance of a popular *dehati* saying '*ikh tak kheti, hathi tak banaj*', (What elephants are to merchandise, sugarcane is to agriculture), (p. 12).

After defining the problems that he intends to tackle, Amin outlines the nineteenth century conditions in Gorakhpur district. Sugar formed a part of the East India Company's investment, and Gorakhpur contributed to the exports of this item. Towards the middle of the century there was a short-lived attempt to set up European-run sugar plantations in the area, but this ended with the business depression of 1848. Sugar production increased considerably over the nineteenth century, but the cane continued to be grown mainly on peasant holdings. Amin stresses that the influence of the market on these cultivators was mediated by a complex web of dependency relationships, so that money-lending and sugar-refining were inextricably bound together.

The ability of the moneylender-manufacturers to dominate the peasantry, Amin argues, was bound up with the specificities of the production cycle itself; with the length of the working period and slowness of the returns. The problem was worsened by the fact that the landlords demanded their rent at times when there were no crops ready for sale. This in turn compelled the peasants to borrow against the security of their sugarcane crop. As Amin puts it:

"It was in the context of this complex relationship between the peasantry and their harvest cycle - the low absolute sum of cash income, the recourse to seasonal borrowing to meet the requirements of foodgrains, seed and cash for rent, and the general dependence on the dominant classes in the village - that the system of cane cultivation based on advances had its true rationale from the point of view of the peasantry." (p. 81).

New purchasers appeared in Gorakhpur's markets after 1890 : refineries in Kanpur began to produce white sugar using *gur* as raw material. But this did not alter the nature of the peasants' relation to the market; 'the Kanpur refiners, lacking any local standing, contracted with the *gur* arathias at Siswa Bazar'. (p. 103). In the early twentieth century cane-crushing sugar mills begin

to appear in the district. While a small fraction of their cane was grown in factory plantations, the bulk of it was purchased from the peasants. Yet the appearance of these large and powerful capitalist enterprises did not dissolve the relations of dependence in which the cultivators were enmeshed: the sugar mills relied on landlords and moneylenders for their cane supplies." (p. 103). Exactly how this was organised forms the subject of a fascinating chapter ('Cane Procurement in the Heyday of the Factories'). This system had many advantages for the factory owners, who always alive to the opportunities it offered for minimising the amount paid to the growers - and even these meagre amounts were further reduced (as Chapter 6 shows), by the 'cut' taken in various forms, by the wealthier men who controlled carts and transport.

Furthermore, even this reduced sum often eluded the peasants' grasp, since the factories contracted for cane with zamindars and moneylenders, and canalised payments through them. Not surprisingly, these men deducted their own claims before giving the balance, if any, to their debtors/tenants. The latter were thus only notionally in contact with the market. The solvent effects of capitalism upon the traditional distribution of authority and wealth were conspicuous by their absence. Even the efforts of the state, which sought sporadically to maintain some sort of balance between the interests of the sugar magnates and the cane growers, signally failed to protect the latter (Chapter 8), while the rise of cooperative societies led to, at most, marginal improvements (Chapter 9).

The above summary cannot, of course, convey any idea of the quality of the text itself, of the way in which a mass of detail is painstakingly integrated into the broad argument. It is the new material presented that allows us to query some aspects of the argument itself.

We may begin with a point raised by Amin himself: was it simply the gap between the seasonality of peasant production and obligatory expenditures that generated dependence? It might be argued, he says, that if rents were lower, or productivity higher, there might theoretically appear to be no reason for the peasants to submit to unfavourable terms. But the real universe, he adds was one "dominated by low levels of income and a pervasive rule of property in land." (p. 75). But the state of affairs described by him was by no means universal: at several places in the text we are introduced to independent peasants, who control the marketing of their own produce - as for instance, the cane growers of West U.P. - while subject to an equally pervasive rule of property in land. So income levels might be the crucial variable - and it is interesting to see from Table 3.1 that the average holding in the Upper Doab was more than twice as large as that in Gorakhpur area. An official report cited by Amin (p. 270), in fact declared that the smallness of holdings in Gorakhpur meant that the cultivator

lacked the resources for better tillage, while the West U.P. cultivators' larger holding provided resources adequate for this purpose. The explanation in terms of resources would be strengthened by the fact that even in Gorakhpur the richer peasants do not seem to have suffered the same losses in the process of marketing as the poorer.

But why were holdings in Gorakhpur small? Was it because the distribution of land was highly unequal? In that case, however, the small peasant, the principal protagonist of the book would not be the most important supplier of sugarcane to the mills, and so a significant lacuna would remain in the account. On the other hand, if most land is held by small holdings, then perhaps sub-division and population pressure should be invoked to understand the pattern of commercialisation in Gorakhpur. There are evidences to indicate that Amin may perhaps have underestimated holding sizes, and therefore exaggerated the importance of the small peasantry in the agrarian economy. He states the average holding to be 1.5 ac. (p. 118, f.note), but the cultivated area was 2.16 million acres, so that there would be 1.44 mn. separate holdings; this is surely too high for a district whose population in 1931 was 3.6 million. Further, it also greatly exceeds the number of ploughs - 360,000. So the holdings may not have been as small as Amin supposes, in which case the small peasant victims of the commercialisation process may be balanced by a richer peasant class of beneficiaries.

However, regardless of these reservations, its painstaking, thorough, and well-documented delineation of a system of dependence and exploitation is bound to establish this book as one of the minor classics of Indian economic history.

Sumit Guha

AN INDIAN RURAL ECONOMY 1880-1955 : The Tamilnad Country-side. By Christopher Baker, Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1984, xxi-616 pp, Rs. 165.

Dr. Christopher Baker has given us a most remarkable book on the rural economy of the Tamil country. Any ideas that one is being offered a laboriously detailed "micro" study are soon dispelled. As the author himself comments, a region of 48,500 square miles and a population of about 29 million (in 1950) hardly qualifies as the basis of a "micro" study. Instead what emerges is a comprehensive and elaborate study of the rural economy -- the patterns of utilization of labour, developments of trade and markets, urbanization and the role of the state --, and the lengthy discussions serve to underline the fact that in regions of India with a diverse and rich history like Tamilnad, each aspect of the rural economy and society can provide sufficient material for a book.

Studies of Indian agrarian economic history come mainly under two classifications, comments Baker. In the British period, especially in the 19th century, the focus was exclusively on tenurial systems, "the legacy of Baden-Powell", while, if modern development economists give a historical bias to their analysis of the failure of Indian agriculture and stagnation of agricultural productivity at all, it is to ascribe the decline of agriculture to various aspects of colonial rule. Their main emphasis is on finding out why something has NOT happened. Baker, on the other hand, is trying to find out why things have developed as they have, by reconstructing the rural history of Tamilnad. "Tamilnad today has a fertile and rapidly developing agriculture, side by side with an immense amount of rural poverty; and a large number of towns and cities which house a rather torpid urban economy." (p.3) This book tries to explain how such an anomalous structure has developed in the region out of its past history.

Baker starts his book (Introduction) with a brief review of the theoretical developments and debates in the analysis of non-western (and especially, Indian) rural economies, which are generally structured on the concepts of dependency and mode of production. Dependency theories basically argue that through the motive force and intrusive power of capitalism, the connections forged between the western countries and the rest of the world in the last two centuries have fundamentally changed the social structure and history of non-western regions. Baker's approach is "aligned rather cantankerously" with this line of analysis. But both theories suffer from a lack of long-term historical perspective in that they are based on the assumption that significant changes have happened in non-Western rural societies only in the last two centuries, brought about by the catalytic force of capitalism or colonialism. But ignoring the individualism and internal structure and contradictions of pre-colonial and pre-capitalistic societies diminishes our understanding of the process of change in these societies and only results in a partial analysis. "The difficulties encountered in the recent debate" points out Baker, "suggest that it is necessary to pay more attention to the character of agriculture and rural society in pre-colonial times....." (p. 10)

There existed in the Tamil region a rural society which was characterized neither by a strong centralized state controlling systems of irrigation, and stagnant isolated villages (Marx's Asiatic mode of production), nor the weak central monarchy of feudal Europe. The state was powerful but not centralized, (and this in fact has led to new theoretical formulations like the "segmentary state" by Burton Stein), and political authority was shared between the

ing and various classes of rural elite (nobles, warlords, regional chiefs, upper gentry, etc.) who mutually supported and reinforced each other's power. Warfare and military strength were the main re-occupations of the state (Marx's Asiatic mode, again!), and the intervention of the state in the rural economy by extending and intensifying agriculture with some necessary state investment in irrigation was motivated by the need to provide the resources for war, food and men. "This was not a society of lord, vassal and weak kingship within which the free peasant, the free merchant and absolutist royalty could emerge as the agents of transformation. Rather there was a powerful though dispersed state system, a mass of basically unfree rural labourers, and a commercial system which was not directly controlled by the state but which served a society in which the state played a powerful role." (p. 12)

Colonial government, Baker goes on to point out, had to fit into this pre-colonial social structure, and in fact, it fitted in very well, because the objective of the colonial state was also military strength supported by an economy of small-scale agriculture. The colonial legacy was thus not the emergence of an entrepreneurial peasant class, but the development of "a powerful and purposive state." The rural elite class, though numerically small, continued to depend on the state to preserve their status and privilege, while the colonial government, needing to turn agriculture into an engine of accumulation, helped the rural rich, but within such limits so that the processes of radical social and economic change would not be set in motion. As a final comment on the rural economy, Baker notes that the economic policies of India continue to preserve and support small-scale agriculture. A rural economy based on small landholders and peasants, and a small but powerful elite group thus provides the continuum in the social history of Tamilnad.

These then are the parameters of Baker's study : the indigenous rural society with its own identity and momentum, and the imperatives of a colonial state. The effects of their mutual interaction on the agriculture and rural economy of the region in the early 20th century is the theme of the book.

Baker begins the book with a brief, impressionistic outline of the shifts and changes in the structure of society in rural Tamilnad over a period of time. To trace these developments Baker divides the Tamil region rather arbitrarily into three regions : the rice growing river-fed "valleys" which were the pre-eminent centres of Tamil civilization, the "plains" (low rainfall regions in the Western and Southern parts of the region) and Kongunadu (mostly modern Coimbatore district), which was a kind of a "frontier" region. Such a classification based on the concept of homogeneous regions instead of the more conservative administrative or historical regions is a major contribution to the study of regional social history. While all of Tamilnad is homogeneous with respect to the language and

certain historical and cultural background, Baker's classification underlines the fact that in subregions within a larger region economic and social relations develop differently in response to local physical features and historical changes. Thus while in each region the superstructure of relations of production was similar in that there was an elite class and an underprivileged class, the basis of power and prestige was different, so that each subregion reacted differently from the others to the forces of colonialism and capitalism. In the rice-growing valleys, thus, status depended on the control over the scarce resource, land, and the Brahmins, with their ritually superior status, in alliance with the Vellala military aristocracy constituted the privileged class, controlling all the land. In the plains which served as a strategic frontier in a long period of increasing warfare, status depended on control over men, and the rural elite comprised the palayakkarars and amaranayaks who could supply men to the King's armies. Kongunad combined features of both regions in its social development. Baker concludes his Prologue with an account of the ryotwari system, and general trends in agriculture in Tamilnadu.

International trade movements and prices also had an important impact on the region's economy, especially because with rising exports prices in Madras became extremely vulnerable to international price fluctuations. In the period of rising prices till the end of World War I, prices in Madras rose by 25% between 1900 and 1910, and "went through the roof" during the War. They crashed in the 1930s, and after a prolonged depression, again "returned through the hole in the roof during World War II." Outlining the changes in prices and trade in Madras during these years Baker illustrates how the government policy of subordinating India's financial stability to Britain's wartime needs during World War I created money stoked inflation and resulted in a fall in real incomes and living standards. Similarly, in the 1930s, when the government finally devalued the rupee and eased the balance of payments position by exporting gold, this resulted in a large sale of gold and windfall profits, but in the long-run, it also meant a considerable dissaving in the agricultural sector.

These fluctuations thus added an extra dimension to the interaction of indigenous society and the policies of the colonial government, and we find the agricultural strategy and economic relations of the different regions developing differently in response to these changes. In the plains, where cash-cropping agriculture developed in a big way in response to the export demand, a strategy of subsistence or minimal agriculture co-existed with more intensive agriculture, with a natural conflict arising between the small peasant and the big landlord. These tensions increased with the depression in the 1930s, and with the increasing relative scarcity of other resources and inputs like cattle, forests and wasteland, but the

basis of the conflict was still rooted in the control over man (labour). In the rice-producing valleys the impetus for agricultural expansion diminished in the 20th century when the South East Asian countries began to export rice in large quantities. The mirasidars or landlords began to neglect agriculture and turned instead to professional services and urban life, and social conflicts sharpened between the cultivators and agricultural labourers, and the upper castes.

In Kongunad the agricultural economy showed neither the tensions of the plains, nor the sluggishness of the valleys, but developed remarkably successfully into entrepreneurial farming, with family farms based on well-irrigation, producing cash crops for the market, with good lands used carefully for crops and poorer land used equally carefully for animal husbandry, and a high rate of capital formation in both. Though the region's economy also suffered from the trade and price fluctuations, the small family-owned, market-oriented farm remained the characteristic unit of production, and survived the trade fluctuations much better than the other regions.

The markets for agricultural produce were particularly affected by the booms and slumps in international trade. A major problem which arose in this period was the over-extension of the credit system in the boom period, and its subsequent collapse in the depression, especially when it became clear that the slump was going to be prolonged. The subsequent trade recovery during the 1920s was not matched by a proportionate increase in credit; meanwhile, the frenetic gold sales when Britain went off the gold standard (Madras made a net export of treasure to the tune of Rs. 35 crores between 1932 and 1935) disguised a long-term loss of security.

Turning to urbanization as a corollary of agricultural development, Baker points out that in its 2000 year history, the region's urban economy had never been linked with complementary ties to the rural economy, and the linkages had always been external. This pattern continued even in the British period, and towns continued as service centres rather than production centres. Thus, the urban enterprises which were started with British and Indian capital survived only as import-export businesses, and the textile industry was the only form of factory industry to develop in urban Tamilnad. Census statistics present a misleading impression of accelerating urban growth, and only 4 towns showed consistent growth. Basically the region was crowded with a large number of small towns which were growing sporadically and irregularly, and urban growth was really a result of the growth in the administrative machinery, and in retail and service occupations. Large scale industry was relatively unimportant, and urban production was more dominated by petty manufacture, so that the towns had become workhouses for the rural poor. Even though the pattern changed after the 1930s, with a steady growth of the big cities, during a period of agricultural decline

a substantial manufacturing sector could not develop. This chapter makes an important contribution to our understanding of the processes of economic development, and explains why urban growth, in the absence of proper rural-urban linkages, has not led to overall economic growth in India.

The colonial system also did not remain unaffected by the changes in the region. To begin with, Baker points out, India was not a typical colony, but performed a more intricate role in a complex empire, as the chief support of an extensive trading system in the East, and as military headquarters. The colonial state then had to "protect and promote this infrastructural role" by collecting enough revenue and undertaking the minimum level of expenditure to keep the wheels of overseas trade turning smoothly. But when the main support of the state -- the region's agriculture and trade -- began to decay, the role of the government also had to change, and its focus had to shift from revenue collection to economic, or at least financial survival. The former trend was seen in the decline of the two main institutions through which the rural economy was controlled, zamindari and village office. The latter was seen in a series of steps, undertaken with the utmost reluctance, like increased investment in irrigation, and a food policy and increased control over agricultural markets. Even these steps were taken only because the colonial government was forced to act in the face of the threat to its survival in the larger context of agrarian crisis and urban unrest, and to contain the protests of the disadvantaged, while also limiting the ambitions of the privileged.

This brief outline can in no way do justice to the great scholarship of the author, seen not only in a surfeit of details, but also in his understanding of the interaction of various forces of social, political and economic change in a specific region. It is a work of great depth and analytical force, touching on all aspects of the agrarian economy, and contributing to many current academic controversies and debates. Primarily it emphasizes that if a society responds to colonialism, it does so with its own logic and in its own institutional framework. But the chain of reaction is not unidirectional; colonial administration is also forced to adapt itself to the forces of the local society. This explains why in India, rural society has remained relatively unchanged after two centuries of colonial rule. The only criticism, if a criticism can be made, is that in such a long book, with each chapter stretching almost to a hundred pages, it is difficult to retain the links to the central argument. In all this is a major contribution to our understanding of the agrarian economy and society in Tamilnad, and in a larger sense, in India.

Kanakalatha Mukund

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