CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION : DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN COLONIAL INDIA

Assumptions about the nature and course of Indian economic history lie at the heart of many analyses of South Asia's recent past. Accounts of peasant society, of political mobilisation, of imperial policy, of the social relations of caste, class and community, all include fundamental hypotheses and expectations about the nature of economic structure and change over time, and the relations between producers, consumers and the state. Furthermore, the whole sub-discipline of development economics, at crucial stages in its evolution, has drawn heavily on the Indian example - in stressing the destructive effects of imperialism, for example, or the mechanisms by which government planning can mobilise savings in poor economies. Modern India is a country where economic history is important, where current issues and problems, and many of the institutions and systems that shape the contemporary economy itself, are closely linked to the legacy of the past.

Table 1.2 Estimates of Indian national product 1900-1946

	Constant prices aggregate			Constant price per head		
	A	B	C	A	B	C
I. Indices (1913 = 100)						
1900	83	89	85	89	95	91
1913	100	100	100	100	100	100
1920	100	94	96	100	94	95
1929	127	110	126	116	100	115
1939	138	119	134	110	925	107
1946	149	127	142	109	93	104
II. Rate of growth (%)						
1900-13	1.44	0.90	1.26	0.93	0.42	0.74
1914-20	0.03	-0.86	-0.58	-0.05	-0.88	-0.70
1921-29	2.69	1.76	3.06	1.67	0.69	2.14
1930-39	0.82	0.79	0.59	-0.54	-0.51	-0.72
1940-46	1.10	0.93	0.63	-0.13	-0.30	-0.41

A: Sivasubramonian (1938-9 prices).

B: Maddison (1938-9 prices).

C: Heston (1946-7 prices).

Siurce: Raymond W.Goldsmith Financial Development of India table 1.2.

London, 1971, pp. 167-8; A Heston, 'National Income", in Dharma Kumar with Meghnad Desai, (ed.), Cambridge Economic History of India: Volume *11,* c. *1757-c 1970* (hereafter *CEHI,* ii) Cambridge, 1984, pp. 398-9 Maddison has updated his estimates somewhat in a recent article, 'Alternative estimates of the real product of India, 1900-1946', *Indian Economic and Social History Review,* 22, 2, 198

The wide spread of interest in our subject makes coherent generalisation about it more difficult. Accounts of social relations among rural producers, for example, are usually based on very different theories of the nature of economic behaviour than are institutional studies of government tariff policy, or statistically generated estimates of changes in the composition of the gross national product. The most detailed studies of production and consumption at the village level often assume that economic phenomena in India exist only as a function of social and cultural relations. Indeed, many scholars who approach the larger discipline of economic history by way of the history of social and economic structures in South Asia have suspected that accounts of autonomous and self-contained processes of economic development, growth and change in other parts of the world are oversimplified corruptions of a complex reality that has been seen through more clearly in India than elsewhere. In return, those studying the history of economic modernisation in the world as differ considerably in the relative shares of the total attributed to agriculture, manufacturing and services, and in the values assigned to each of these components, they do show a certain degree of convergence in identifying periods of growth and of stagnation.

The weakness of all these estimates is that we can have no certainty about the history of agricultural output in colonial India, especially the course of yield rates and productivity. The bulk of the Indian population remained employed in agriculture throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries - the percentage of the workforce employed in agriculture may actually have risen very slightly in this period, and remained at over 70 per cent throughout - although the sectoral

Table I.I. Demographic background India 1871-1971

	Population India (mil)	Annual Population growth rate (%)[a]	Birth rate (per thou)a	Death rate (per thou)a	Literary rate %	Urban Population %	Life expectancy at birth[a](m) (f)
	(1A)	(2A)	(3A)	(4A)	(5A)	(6A)	(7A)
1871	249.44	-	-	-	-	8.7	-
1881	254.51	0.20	-	-	-	9.3	-
1891	276.69	0.89	-	-	6.1	9.4	-
9101	280.87	0.11	51.4	50.0	6.2	10.0	20.1 21.8
1911	298.20	0.65	47.7	41.7	7.0	9.4	23.9 23.4
1921	299.63	0.09	49.1	48.6	8.3	10.2	20.1 20.9
1931	332.29	1.05	48.2	37.9	9.2	11.1	28.1 27.8
1941	382.56 (1B)	1.41 (2B)	45.0[b] (3B)	31.0[b] (4B)	15.1 (5B)	21.8 (6B)	33.1 31.1 (7B)
1951	360.2	1.23	40	27	-	17.3	34.9 32.5
1961	439.0	2.00	42	23	24.0	18.0	41.9 41.6
1971	561.0	2.30	40	16	29.4	19.9	46.4 44.7

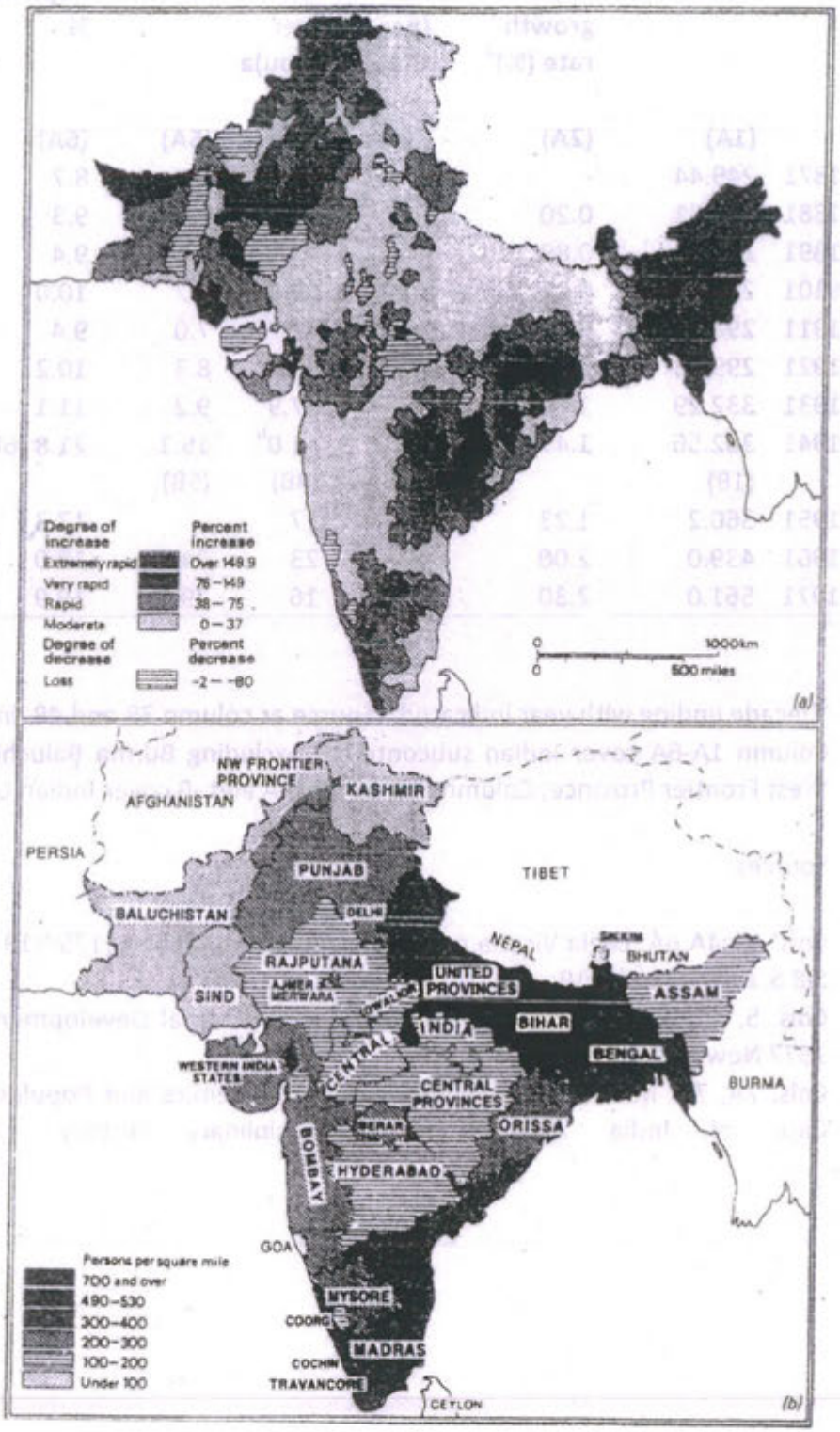
[a]Decade ending with year indicated. [b]Source as column 3B and 4B. includes Burma. Column 1A-6A cover Indian subcontinent excluding Burma Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Province; Columns [1] B-6B and $_7$A and $_7$B cover Indian Union.

Sources:

Cols. 1A-4A 6A: Leela Visaria and Prain Visaria Population (1757-1947) CEHI 2 tables 5.8 5.13 5.16 and 5.19.

Cols. 5, 1B,6B: Raymond W. Goldsmith The Financial Development of India 1860-1977 New Haven 1983 table 1-1.

Cols. 7A, 7B: Michelle B. McAlpin Famines Epidemics and Population Growth: The Case of India Journal of Interdisciplinary History 1,4,2,1983 table


Degree of increase
Percent increase
Extremely rapid
Over 149.9
Very rapid
75–149
Rapid
38–75
Moderate
0–37
Degree of decrease
Percent decrease
Loss
-2–-80
0
1000 km
0
500 miles
(a)
NW FRONTIER PROVINCE
KASHMIR
AFGHANISTAN
PERSIA
PUNJAB
TIBET
BALUCHISTAN
DELHI
NEPAL
SIKKIM
BHUTAN
RAJPUTANA
AJMER MERWARA
UNITED PROVINCES
SIND
GWALIOR
ASSAM
INDIA
BIHAR
CENTRAL
BENGAL
WESTERN INDIA STATES
CENTRAL PROVINCES
BURMA
BERAR
ORISSA
BOMBAY
HYDERABAD
GOA
Persons per square mile
700 and over
490–530
300–400
200–300
100–200
Under 100
MYSORE
COORG
MADRAS
COCHIN
TRAVANCORE
CEYLON
(b)

contribution of agriculture to national product probably declined. The most widely accepted set of estimates available (those made by George Blyn in his *Agricultural Trends m India, 1891-194-;* (1966)) suggests that productivity problems resulted in a clear fall of per capita agricultural output, especially for foodgrains, in the first half of the twentieth century.[54] The basis of these calculations has often been disputed, and there is some evidence to suggest that under-reporting may have increased as the colonial administration loosened its grip on agricultural taxation in the inter-war period, but even Alan Heston's more optimistic account of national income and per capita output during the colonial period has concluded that the safest assumption is that aggregate agricultural productivity was static over the period from i860 to 195c as a whole, at the levels achieved in the early 1950s. On the basis of this assumption, which he could produce no direct evidence to support, Heston has estimated that real NDP rose by 53 per cent between 1868 and 1912, while population increased by only 18 per cent. Between 1900 and 1947 real NDP per head was virtually stagnant at best (the estimates summarised in table 1.2 all show a slight decline), with any net increase coming almost entirely from the service sector. Heston's figures also suggest that per capita income rose by over 30 per cent between 1871 and 1911, and then stagnated for the rest of the colonial period. These data make it clear that at the close of the colonial period in 1947 the extent of development in India was still very limited: average per capita foodgrain availability was about 400 grams, the literacy rate was 17 per cent of those over the age of 10, and life expectancy at birth only 32.5 years.[55] While these indicators have risen somewhat in the forty-five years since Independence, India's economy has enjoyed a slower rate of growth than most others in the developing world, and she is still home to a large percentage of the world's poor.

This evidence, for what it is worth, suggests that there was a distinct but slow-moving process of economic change at work in India in the

1.2(a) Population, rates of increase by district, 1891-1941
Data plotted by districts in British Indian provinces, and by similar-size smaller states and agencies. Some of the 1891 data estimated.
1.2(b) Population densities by province, 1941

[54] For a further discussion of this issue, see below pp. 30-2.
[55] Heston, 'National Income', *CEHI,* u, pp. 390, 397-9, 410-11.

Modern period characterized by minimal improvements in rates in rates of capital and labour productivity and resulting in fluctuating and uncertain patterns of growth. While precise comparisons are not possible it would appear that crop yields, industrial productivity and levels of human capital formation have been as low in India as anywhere else in Asia over the last, ,15o years[56]. Such conclusions must be treated with care, however. The slight improvement in some indicators of living standards at various times over the last century of the colonial period is not evidence of the beneficial effects of British rule while the evident poverty of large numbers of the Indian population at Independence does not conclusively prove that imperialism was the sole cause of the destitution of its subject more importantly the bird's-eye view of the structure and characteristics of the Indian economy that can be derived from a very general interpretation of aggregate indicators should not lead us to the view that nineteenth-century India was a 'traditional' subsistence economy awaiting the transforming touch of commercialisation and modernization. Literacy urbanization the growth of national product improvements in productivity, and the spread of technical change can only properly be understood in an ecological, social economic and political context that pays due attention to local details as well as to national averages.

The economic history of India is not a story with a strong plot which lays bare the mechanism by which a set of progressive, or recessive circumstances came about. The Indian economy of the 1970s was different to that of the , 186os, but, it is hard to say that ,it had arrived at the end of a journey or had even progressed along a clear path from one point to the other. For this reason it is unwise to introduce the subject by simply laying out for analysis the conventional indicators of performance and structure - output, patterns of asset-holding, sectoral employment and so on. Such an approach would underestimate the true extent and complexity of economic, social and political change minimise regional diversity and give too firm a meaning to ambiguous' and inconclusive statistical and documentary evidence

While the overall aggregate rate of growth was sluggish and unpredictable, this does not mean that nothing was happening in the Indian colonial economy. At certain times, in particular sectors and specific regions, there was quite considerable growth in output, associated with capital accumulation by peasants, landlords, merchants, bankers and industrialists, and some investment in productivity- and profit-enhancing production processes. Some agriculturalists were able to take advantage of increased world demand for crops such as jute, cotton and groundnuts, while Indian businessmen manufactured cotton yarn for export in the nineteenth century and a wide range of products for the domestic consumer market in the twentieth. Whatever the problems of agriculture, rural producers managed to just about

[56] R.P. Sinha Competing Ideology and Agricultural Strategy Current Agricultural Development in India and China compared with Meiji Strategy World Development 1,6,1973 and Shigeru Ishikawa Essays on Tecnology Employment and Institutions in Economic Development Tokyo 1981, ch.1.

sustain a steadily rising population, which increased at an average rate of *0.6* per cent per year between 1871 and 1941, and more rapidly since then. While all the best agricultural land was probably in use by 1900, some colonisation went on until the 1950s, and the area under irrigation almost doubled between 1900 and 1939, and rose sharply after 1947. There is also considerable evidence of technical change in agriculture, in handicrafts, and in mechanised industry. The spread of new seeds and crop-strains aided output growth in cotton and groundnuts, for example, while techniques such as the transplantation of rice and the ginning of cotton increased yields and marketability. Indian workmen had few difficulties acquiring the skills needed to operate modern textile machinery, while the Tata Iron and Steel Company, the premier industrial enterprise of colonial India, set up a successful Technical Institute in 1921 and an Indian-staffed Research and Control Laboratory in 1937. In handicrafts, fly-shuttle looms and the use of rayon and other artificial fibres broadened the technological base of the handloom weavers in the inter-war years. While demonstration programmes and official research institutes played some part in this process, the chief incentive to technical change was economic. As one government official pointed out to the *Indian Famine Commission* in 1880, the spread of improved cotton gins in central India and elsewhere was chiefly the result of 'the first cotton merchant who offered a fraction of an anna more for clean than dirty cotton', who had done 'more for Wardha cotton than I, with all the resources of the Government at my back, ever accomplished'.[57]

This evidence all suggests strongly that some growth, capital accumulation, technical change and innovation occurred in colonial South Asia, but despite these signs of dynamism the Indian economy did not experience anything that can properly be called 'development' under British rule. Text-book definitions stress that development is a qualitatively distinctive phenomenon that should not be confused with the more limited process of output growth; as Gerald Meier has summarised it, in the conventional view:

> Development is taken to mean growth plus change; there are essential qualitative dimensions in the development process that extend beyond the growth or expansion of an economy through a simple widening process. This qualitative difference is especially likely to appear in the improved performance of the factors of production and improved techniques of technical change – in our growing control over nature. It is also likely to appear in the development of institutions and a change in attitudes and values[58]

In addition to improvements in productivity as a result of technical innovation, many development economists stress equity considerations as a necessary part of any process of economic change that can properly be labelled development. Thus Meier's own preferred definition of development is of a 'process by which the real

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[57] Quoted in D.R. Gadgil The Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times 1860-1939 5th edn Bombay 1971 p. 74.

[58] Gerald m.Meier Leading Issue in Economic Development 5th edn New York 1989 p.6.

per capita income of a country increases over a long period of time - subject to the stipulations that the number of people below an "absolute poverty line" does not increase and that the distribution of income does not become more unequal.[59] In the setting of densely populated agrarian economies such as those of South, South-East and East Asia, these conditions can only come about if, over time, labour achieves sustained increases in productivity, employment, and returns above subsistence. This definition of development also helps to bring its opposite, underdevelopment, into sharper focus. As Joseph Stiglitz has suggested, LDCs (Less Developed Countries) are those in which fewer people than average have the capacity for full personal fulfilment, giving economists and economic historians the task of explaining the reasons for 'the dramatically different standards of living of those who happen to live in different countries and within different regions within the same country' which Stiglitz has characterised as 'the most central issue facing most of mankind today.[60]

For South Asia, then, our problem is to explain an economic history in which technical change and capital accumulation took place, but in which productivity and welfare did not improve very much. Economic historians have found it difficult to explain the absence of development in the modern world, and, like Gerschenkron and Schumpeter have usually only managed to define 'backwardness' in terms of the absence of dynamic features seen in other countries or in the same country at a later date. Those such as Kuznets and Rostow, who have conceptualised the process of development as a series of preconditions or stages of growth, offer little help in understanding the history of economies which have failed to pass through the evolutionary processes laid down for them. Lloyd Reynolds's recent study, Economic Growth in the Third World, 1850-1980, follows Kuznets in distinguishing extensive growth, in which population and output are growing at roughly the same rate, from 'intensive' growth, in which there is a rising trend of per capita output, and accepts that economies experiencing extensive growth can display economic sophistication and some innovation and institutional change. Thus Reynolds suggests that India in 1947 began intensive growth 'not from a situation of stagnation, but from an economy visibly in motion[61] but his account remains too one-dimensional, and too concerned to identify a link between a rising export: GDP ratio and the onset of intensive growth, to be of much use in explaining the South Asian experience.

The descriptions and explanations of the apparent lack of growth and development in the Indian economy produced during the colonial period itself were dominated by the nationalist critique of British rule and the imperial response to it. This debate, which has continued to haunt the modern literature as well, was political in origin

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[59] Ibid italics in original.

[60] Joseph E. Stiglitz Rational Peasants Efficient Institutions and a theory of Rural Organization: Methodological Remarks for Development Economics in Pranab Bardhan (ed.) The Economic Theory of Agrarian Institutions Oxford 1989 pp. 19-20.

[61] Lloyd G. Reynolds Economic Growth in the Third World 1850-1980 an Introduction New Haven 1985 p. 30.

revolving around the question of whether India had suffered or benefitted from British rule In economic terms it focused attention on the evident poverty of the mass of the Indian people in the late nineteenth century, and the prevalence of famine in the 1870s and late 1890s, which seemed to suggest that agriculture could not support the population. The nationalist argument, put forward most forcefully by Dadabhai Naoroji, a Parsi businessman and founder of the Indian National Congress, who was elected to the House of Commons to speak for Indian interests in the 18_{9}os, and by R. C. Dutt, who resigned from the ICS to pursue his attacks on the revenue administration of Bengal, focused on the distortions to the Indian economy brought about by British rule, and by the impoverishment of the mass of the population through the colonial 'drain of wealth' from India to Britain over the course of the nineteenth century.[62]

The nationalist case was underpinned by assertions that the British had destroyed or deformed a successful and smoothly functioning pre-colonial Indian economy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The coming of British rule was seen to have removed indigenous sources of economic growth and power, and replaced them by imperial agents and networks. This deprived Indian entrepreneurs and businessmen in the 'modern' sector of the chance to lead a process of national regeneration through economic development, and also had severe welfare and distributional effects in the 'traditional' sector by imposing foreign competition on handicraft workers and forced commercialisation on agriculturalists.

As we will see, modern studies of the transition to colonialism in India provide a rather different contrast between the economies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Indian economy certainly underwent structural change over the course of the nineteenth century, but the causes and results of this were complex. From recent work on the pre-British economy we know that commercialisation and unequal social structures existed before colonialism, yet although the pre-colonial economy contained nodes of mercantilist growth, their development and welfare effects remain unclear. Indian capitalists played an active role in helping the East India Company to create its empire in South Asia, and in working with it when it came. While British rule caused a set-back for some activities of Indian merchants and commercial capitalists, it did not suppress all of them for long, and may have helped some areas, such as the Gujerati textile centre of Ahmedabad, which had suffered particularly badly from the consequences of political instability.

The central theme of the nationalist case was the way in which Indian resources were drained off to Britain by the mechanism of imperial rule. India had long appeared to be a major asset for Britain When the East India Company first took control of Bengal in the 1760s, and became able to use tax revenue to purchase goods for export to England without needing to ship bullion to India, it seemed to

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[62] Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-Bruish RhU*, London, 1901; R. C. Dutt, *The Economic History of India tn the Victorian Age*, London. 1906.

some m London that these limitless revenues would become, in the words of the Earl of Chatham, 'the redemption of a nation . . . a kind of gift from heaven[63]." Yet as early as 1772, when a financial crisis in Bengal prevented the EIC from paying a dividend and required it to ask the British government for assistance, London was forced to face up to what became the great riddle of the Raj - whether India was Britain's foremost asset or her greatest liability. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century India was the largest purchaser of British exports, a major employer of British civil servants at high salaries, the provider of half of the Empire's military might, all paid for from local revenues, and a significant recipient of British capital[64]." The crucial point for the nationalists was that India ran a persistent surplus in her current balance of trade account, with her exports of goods to the world as a whole meeting a large deficit in goods and services with Britain, plus interest charges and capital repayments in London.

The main lines of debate over the drain theory have long been established. Imperial apologists such as Sir Theodore Morison and Vera Anstey argued that most of India's payments to Britain were made in return for services or capital that increased the wealth of the local economy. The size of the unrequited transfers, those needed to meet the 'Home Charges' (the administrative and military expenses of the Indian Government in Britain), was small, running at around Rs 20 million a year, less than 2 per cent of total export values at the end of the nineteenth century and less than i per cent by 1913.[65] Anstey herself claimed that if there had been no Home Charges and no loans in London, but India had provided for her own military and naval defence, then India would have come out the loser - 'it is surely obvious that the "saving" effected would be a negative quantity[66] Nationalists fiercely contested the assumptions on which such calculations were based, arguing in particular that India's defence establishment was designed to meet Britain's needs, and that the railways were an expensive military asset rather than an appropriate piece of developmental infrastructure. The classic nationalist case was that Britain's entire favourable balance of payments with her colony represented the size of the drain of wealth, with a convenient floor-figure set by India's export surplus in merchandise (representing the net total of Indian current payments to Britain less British capital exports to India). A recent re-calculation on this basis has suggested that the drain in 1882 amounted to Rs 1,355 million (in 1946-7 prices), more than 4 per cent of national income in that year.[67]

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[63] P.J. Marshall Problems of Empire: Britain and India 1757- 1813 LonDon 1968 pp. 30-1.

[64] Acording to the lastest estimates for british capital exports from 1860 and 1914 between 1239 and 1290 million raised in London was invested in India more than half of it in the form of government loans. The Indian total represented about 20 per cent of all capital sent to the Empire and about 7 per cent of all capital exports from Britain. See Lance E. Davis & Robert A. Huttenback Mammon and the Pursuit of Empire. The Political Economy of British Imperialism 1860-1912 Cambridge 1968 table 2.1.

[65] K. N. Chaudhuri India's International Economy in the Nineteenth Century: An Hmoncal Survey', *Modem Asian Studies, 2*,1, 1968, p. 44

[66] Anstey, *Economic Development of India,* p. 5 1 1 .

[67] Irfan Habib, 'Studying a Colonial Economy - without Perceiving Colonialism', *Modern Auan Studies,* 19,), 1985, pp. 375-6.

Whatever definitions of the drain are used, it is hard to demonstrate that the poverty of the rural economy was the direct result of high rates of taxation to fund unrequited transfer payments to Britain. Although taxation in India increased markedly in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, partly to meet the increased exchange costs of remitting money to London while the silver-standard rupee was depreciating sharply against the gold-standard pound sterling, this did not fall primarily on agriculture. Between 1872 and 1893 central government tax revenue rose from Rs 374 million to Rs 501 million, but over one-third of the increase came from non-agricultural taxation such as tariffs, excises and the income tax. While total taxes rose by 34 per cent, agricultural prices rose by 44 per cent and taxes on agriculture by 23 per cent[68]. By 1900 the land tax represented about 5 per cent of the value of gross agricultural output, and was responsible for less than half of the average per capita burden of taxation.

As S.B. Saul has shown[69] Britain's balance of payments surplus with South Asia was certainly an important element in the world pattern of settlements in the second half of the nineteenth century enabling the United kingdom to meet 30-40 per cent her deficit with other industrialized nations and helping to sustain her performance as an economy with a global balance of payments surplus long after her trading position in most parts of the world had declined. From the Indian end however the issues of the balance of payments surplus is complicated by the problem of classifying bullion imports of gold and silver which are usually added into the commodity trade import figures. The Indian rupee was a silver currency on a bullion standard with open mints until 1893 and India was a major importer of silver in the late nineteenth century. About one third of India's trade surplus in goods between 1872 and 1893 was financed by imports of specie mostly silver the bulk of which was used as transaction coinage or saved in the form of hoarded coin bullion and jewellery. If the inflow of precious metals were regarded as the repatriated profits of the export trade in commodities rather than as a visible commodity import then it can be argued that the Indian economy was running a surplus on goods services and capital combined which she was liquidating by importing the medium of mass saving in the form of specie some of which was minted to meet the need for increased monetary transaction in a period of commercial expansion and rising prices. The main elements of India's balance of payments in this period are set out in table 1.3.

This analysis sets South Asia's traditional role in world trade as a sink for precious metals first noted by Pliny in ancient times and used by J. M. Keynes in his Indian Currency and Finance (1913) to strengthen the case for a gold-exchange standard for Indian with a token currency against the late nineteenth century theory of the colonial drains of wealth from Indian to Britain. Although the gold price of silver in the world economy fell by about 40 per cent in this period it was not falling faster

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[68] Government of India, *Report of the Indian Currency Committee, 1898,* [Fowler Committee], Appendix it, no. 52.

[69] S. B. Saul Studies in British Overseas Trade 1870-1914 Livepool 1960 ch.viii.

than any other gold price and so it is difficult to sustain the argument that the world was somehow acquiring India's exports cheap by paying for them with a devalued commodity. After 1900 when the rupee was linked to gold at a fixed rate through an exchange standard with sterling, the story told by continued bullion imports is less ambiguous. In the pre-war trade boom between 1909-10 and 1912-13, for example, India imported Rs 1,174 million worth of gold, including Rs 4$ million worth of sovereigns which went into circulation, increased her gold reserves by Rs 294 million, and imported a further Rs 549 million worth of silver, only a third of which was used for coinage.[70]

Specie imports by themselves do not reveal anything about the pattern of distribution inside the colonial economy. It is possible to imagine a set of circumstances in which inequality increased along with bullion imports, and some modern historians working within the nationalist tradition have argued that capital did increase in India, but that it accumulated in the hands of 'parasitic' groups of landlords, usurers and native aristocrats. Certainly the availability of silver and gold for hoarding may well have discouraged the development of flexible savings instruments that could have helped finance more dynamic investment and more efficient provision of liquidity. What the inflow of specie does suggest, however, is that some Indians were increasing their assets during the colonial period. This is an important point, since the central contention of the drain theory in its original form was that the mechanisms of British rule removed any investible surplus above subsistence from India, and that therefore no growth at all was possible: as Naoroji put it, 'the drain prevents India from making any capital[71] The imperial apologists who responded to this case argued that national income had increased somewhat in the late nineteenth century, but agreed that any process of economic growth was so slow as to be almost undetectable, being held back largely by social, cultural and religious barriers to material improvement. Despite the atavistic power of the debate over British rule and Indian 'improvement', this is the point at which the modern literature must part company with its colonial ancestor, for almost all current accounts of the recent economic history of India are concerned with classifying a distinguishable process of economic change, however distorted or sluggish it may have been, and analysing its effect on classes and interests inside rather than outside South Asia.

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[70] J. M. Keynes, *Indian Currency and Finance,* London, 1913, pp. 108-10, and G. Findlay Shirras, *Indian Finance and Banking,* London, 1920, p. 463

[71] Dadabhai Naoroji, 'Povcny of India', p. 38, in *Poverty and Un-British Rule.*

Table 1.3. India annual balance of Payments on Current account 1869-70 to 1894-8 (Σmillions quinquennial averages)

	Balance merchandise Trade	Net Treasure Imports	Balance Visible Trade (1+2)	Home Charges	Other Invisibles	All Invisible (4+5)	Balance of Payments Current Account (3-6)
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1869-73	+22.8	-8.4	+14.2	-8.8	-15.6	-24.4	-10.2
1874-8	+21.0	-6.4	+14.6	-9.3	-18.0	-27.3	-12.7
1879-83	+23.8	-7.1	+16.7	-10.7	-17.7	-28.4	-11.7
1884-8	+23.8	-9.2	+14.6	-12.3	-18.0	-30.3	-15.7
1889-93	+25.2	-9.7	+15.5	-13.5	-19.4	-32.9	-17.4
1894-8	+20.7	-5.6	+15.1	-13.9	-18.9	-32.8	-17.7

Note: a plus sign (+) indicates net exports of goods a minus sign (-) indicates net imports of goods and net exports of remittances service charges and other invisibles.

The most through direct estimate of flows of long-term foreign capital into India from 1870 to 1899 gives a total of between 123.2 million and 144.8 million most of which was in the form of sterling loans to the Secretary of State for India in Landon (see Lance E. Davis and Robert A. Huttenback Mammon and the pursuit of Empire. The Polotical Economy of British Imperialism 1860-1912 Cambridge 1986 table 2.1.)

Source: A.K. Banerji Aspects of Indo-British Economic Relations 1858-1898 bombay 1982 tables 34A and 40A.

In general, mainstream economic theory, in all its variants has had little to say about the absence of development. In neo-classical analysis all economies tend towards equilibrium, but it is difficult to identify or explain what is happening to those in which an equilibrium is reached below maximum efficiency. In both classical and orthodox Marxist analyses, capitalism is usually seen as a uniquely progressive force in an economy, with capital accumulation and investment the only way to increase productivity, raise output and provide a surplus that can be redistributed to maintain returns to labour above subsistence.

Karl Marx, like almost all his contcmporaries saw the Asian economies of India and China as having no history, begin the products of societies in which political and economic networks and institutional systems did not interact. In Capital, and elsewhere Marx developed the concepts of 'primitive accumulation' and of an 'Asiatic mode of production' to explain the existence of large, static Eastern economies and societies that were not likely by themselves to progress through feudalism to capitalism. The self-sufficiency of the Indian economy was based on Village republics' with 'cut and dried' patterns of community organisation, which encompassed communal property rights in a combination of agriculture and handicraft manufacture Villages were entirely self-sustaining, containing within themselves, all the conditions of production and surplus accumulate, while cue were mere military or princely camps, .in wh.ch despotic ruler received tribute from the countryside in return for the maintenance of irrigation works[72].

Marx thiugh that the coming of British rule was the greatest threat to this existing social and economic order, and argued that it would prepare the way for a capitalist economy dominated eventual y by a domestic bourgeoisie. However, he was also highly critical of the disruptive effects of colonial administration in the 1830s 1840s and 1850s and saw the commercialisation of agriculture and the flooding of the Indian market with mass-produced Lancashire cotton goods as Lading to the destruction of old social arrangements without any dynamic process of constructive change. Later theorists have followed these dual strands in Marx's own thinking by developing theories of Imperialism that attribute the modes of production m the Third World economies of the twentieth century directly to the impact of imperial systems and colonial states.

Central to many of these later accounts has been the concept of dependency, 'a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjected.[73] This notion of dependent development does distinguish between the role of capitalism as a progressive force in the core but a regressive one in the periphery, and gives a major role to imperialism in tightly circumscribing the extent of any development that peripheral capitalism can achieve. However, empirical studies of the pattern of growth in many Third World countries since the 1960s have led to the revival of a more orthodox Marxist view of peripheral development, encapsulated in Geoffrey Kay's comment that 'capitalism created underdevelopment not because it exploited the underdeveloped world but because it did not exploit it enough[74] The best-known revisionist account, Bill Warren's, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism*[75] explicitly took Marx's analysis of Britain's necessary role in transplanting capitalism in

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[72] For a convenient brief summary of Marx's views on India see Daniel thornier the Shaping of modern India New Delhi 1980 p. 363 ff.

[73] T. Dos Santos, 'The Structure of Dependence', *American Economic Review,* 40,2,1970, P 231.

[74] G. B. *Kay, Development and Underdevelopment: A Marxist Analysis,* London, 1975, p.x.

[75] Bill Warren, *Imperialism: Pioneer of Capitalism,* London, 1980

India as its starting-point. These 'menshevik' theories, as they have been called[76] see capital as a progressive force, however exploitative, in Africa, Asia and Latin America. They are useful in disentangling capitalism from a functionalist relationship with imperialism, but they do not help much in analysing the inhibitory factors that prevented many economies subject to colonial rule from undergoing development. The notion of an underdeveloped world dominated by some sort of primitive economy in Marx's sense still lurks beneath their surface.

As we have seen, nationalist interpretations of Indian economic history from the late nineteenth century onwards argued that India was far from being a primitive economy before the British. Colonial rule was thought to have removed or distorted the developmental base reached by 'domestic industry and agriculture in the eighteenth century, and then suppressed the entire economy in the nineteenth century by the mechanism of the drain of wealth. These ideas were sustained and refined in Indian Marxists analyses during the early twentieth century notably in R. Palme Dutt India today (1940) and were then incorporated into dependency theory through the work of Paul Baran who revived the notion that the coming of British rule in India had broken up pre-existing self-sufficient agricultural communities and forced a shift to the production of export crops which distorted the internal economy. In his political Economy of Growth (1957) Baran took up the central insight of the nationalist analysis suggesting that about 10 per cent of India's gross national product was transferred to Britain each year in the early decades of the twentieth century and suggested that had this sum been invested in South Asia India's economic development to date would have borne little similarity to the actual sonmbre record[77]. To Baran the colonial drain was a mercantilist concept – India's loss of economic resources and their transfer to Britain was a consequence of her political subordination. Thus asymmetrical power and political relations rather than natural endowments or comparative advantage determined the economic history of underdeveloped countries:

Far from serving as an engine of economic expansion of technological process and of social change the capitalist order in these countries has represented a framework for economic stagnation for arthaic technology and fpr social backwardness[78].

The notion of colonial South Asia as host a particular regressive from of capitalism leading to dependency underdevelopment or sustained backwardness has been refined further in the work of Amiya Bagchi and Hamza Alavi for example into the

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[76] Colin Leys, *Conflict and Convergence in Development Theory,* in Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Jurgen Osterhammel (eds.), *Imperialism and After: Continuities and Discontinuities,* German Historical Institute, London, 1986, pp. 321-2

[77] Paul Baran the Political Economy of Growth New Yorks 1957 p. 148. It is worth nothing that this estimate of the size of the drain is more than double that of Irfan Habib cited above (p.13).

[78] Ibid p. 163.

concept of a distinct colonial mode of production[79]. This argues that British rule brought about a process of economic change in South Asia which had some dynamic features but the these were functionally determined to serve the needs of the metropolitan economy and so established a dependent form of underdevelopment. Colonial rule broke down the autonomous economy of independent handicraft workers and self-sufficient peasants, and directed domestic economic activity towards two main areas - export-oriented agriculture with very small returns to provide primary products for the West at bargain prices before Independence, and limited industrialisation dependent on alliances with foreign firms for technology since then. The laws, institutions and social structure of contemporary South Asia were thus a creation of Britain's requirement for cheap labour and cheap exports within the imperial system, and the dominant classes that have exercised control over agricultural and industrial capital for the last hundred years or so are identified as the product of this colonial transformation. By these means Indian labour has been exploited indirectly but effectively for the sake of metropolitan capital, and successive forms of colonial and post-colonial capitalism have been created that did not need to increase productivity or wages.

The analysis of dependent underdevelopment contends, like the nationalist critique of the colonial economy before it, that the British conquest was the chief reason for India's development problems over the last 200 years. As we have already seen, such arguments put a heavy interpretative loading on the impact of British rule, and tend to overestimate the extent to which this destroyed either a self-sufficient 'primitive' economy, or a burgeoning state-capitalist developmental one The British certainly altered the political economy and state structure of India fundamentally in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and severely disrupted some established patterns of trade, of investment, and of agricultural and handicraft production, but the quantitative extent and qualitative significance of the consequences of this - in the form of de-industrialisation, forced commercialisation, and the transfer of land-holding to traders and moneylenders - is hard to assess. Studies of many different localities during the first century or so of British rule have stressed the extent of continuity rather than change in the holding and exercise of social and economic power. Local social structures, and the interaction between social power and economic opportunity, were often remarkably unaffected by the waxing and waning of imperial control; the chief reason, *(or* economic stagnation were usually present before the British arrived remained in place during their rule, and have stayed there after its ending.

India cannot be classified as a simple form of colonial economy, in which surplus extraction and functionally determined social organization created a system of non-progressive economic activity. British imperialism had a very important impact on the economic history of modern South Asia but it was not the only reason for the

[79] Amiya Kumar Bagchi The Political Economy of Underdevelopment Cambridge 1982; Hamza Alavi et al. Capitalism and Colonial Production London 1980.

phenomenon of growth without development. The economic history of South Asia is not broadly dissimilar to that of other large and populous Asian economies such as China and Indonesia which were not part of the British Empire. While these areas were exposed to European imperialism formal or informal in a broad sense neither shared India's precise experience under foreign rule. The history of the Indian economy since 1947 has revealed many of the same problems of low productivity and non-developmental social organization that were apparent in the colonial period. India like other Third World economies may have suffered from neglect by the liberal institutional structure of the post-war international economic system and may have been subjected to neo-imperial ties through aid and direct private investment mechanisms but such ties have been universal affecting large numbers of countries in Asia Africa and Latin America and their impact in India cannot be attributed solely to her colonial past.

While Indian interests were clearly subordinated to British ones in important respects during the lifetime of the British raj Indian economic history was not simply that of a subaltern subservient economy. As in other applications of subaltern studies to Indian history the separate levels of dominance and subservience among different groups of Indian must be accounted for. The theme of inequality runs strongly through Indian colonial history but economic relations were as unequal within colonial society as they were between the imperial power and its colonial subjects. Subaltern studies do no give much help in understanding the dominant agents in a subordinate economy. Some Indian professionals, businessmen, landlords and surplus peasants[80] derived considerable benefits from the local power that was conferred on them by British rule; it is hard to see that these elites missed out on profits or advantages in the medium term because of India's subordinate position. Even those Indian businessmen who found their industrialising ambitions apparently thwarted by the colonial government's commitment to laissez-faire economic policies were eventually able to supplant their expatriate rivals as the dominant element in the private sector. There was no such thing as an entirely subordinate economy within the British Empire - every country s economy contained both dominant and subordinate groups Subalterns certainly suffered in colonial India, and were more plentiful there than in imperial Britain, but they did exist in the core as well as at the periphery of the imperial system.

Like Marx, the orthodox classical economists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were concerned to understand and explain processes of rapid and fundamental economic change. For the classical economists such change would inevitably be accompanied by the conventional measures of growth and development; the only alternative to a developing economy was a static one - a 'stationary state, in which there was no capital accumulation (profit) and no

[80] Surplus peasants are defined as those controlling family that could in a normal years grow and retain enough food and other produce to produce a surplus over their own subsistence requirements without the need to seek off- farm employment.

technical progress (investment or increased labour productivity). Thus, as Adam Smith commented on China (and by extension all Asian economies of the late eighteenth century):

In, country which had acquired that full complement of riches which the nature of « soil and climate, and its situation with respect to other countries, allowed it to acquired which could, therefore, advance no further ... both the wages of labour and the profit, of stock would probably be very low....perhaps no country has Yet armed at this degree of opulence. China seems to have been long stationary and has probably long ago acquired that full complement of riches that is consistent with the nature of its laws and institutions. But this complement may be to what, with other laws and institutions, the nature of us sod, climate and situation might admit of.[81]

In the event, Smith argued, "the poverty of the taw people far surpasses that of the most beggarly nations of Europe[82]. Following Smith, later writers in the class.cal tradition, and the revisionist new-classical' school that has come to prominence n development economics over the lan twenty years, have sough, to explain economic backwardness in terms of inappropriate laws and Institutions which prevent the dynamics of capitalism from unleashing the forces of growth. Such arguments stress that all economies can achieve development providing that they expose themselves to the efficiencies generated by free markets and unfettered competition. In poor densely settled regions population pressures may make dynamic growth harder to achieve but simple Malthusian traps can be avoided by foreign trade by migration and by technical progress to make land and labour more productive.

Scholars adopting a new-classical focus on the Smithian analysis of the laws and institutions that have inhibited Indian development have produced important alternative interpretations of the economic history of modern South Asia. One of the earliest of these was Gunnar Myrdal's portrayal in Asian Drama of the Indian economy as determined by social systems that bound it to a low-level equilibrium characterized by low labour productivity low per capita incomes traditional and primitive production techniques and low levels of living. This interconnected causal relationship between productivity and incomes levels of living and labour inputs and productivity could only be overcome by a positive programme of modernisation that would promote rationality equality planning democracy and appropriate values as well as economic efficiency. The only force that Myrdal saw as powerful enough to overcome the forces of stagnation social stability and equilibrium that would perpetuate poverty and inequality was the nation state. Here however he thought the Indian government unequal to the task categorizing it as a soft state unable to impose the social discipline needed to force economic political and ideological

[81] Wealth of Nations I p. 106 quoted in H.W. Arndt The Rise and fall of Economic Development Melbourne 1978 p.8.

[82] Wealth of Nations 1 p. 73 quoted in H. W. Arndt Development Economics before 1945 in Jagdish Bhagwati and Richard S. Eckaus (eds.) Development and Planning Essays in honour of paul Rosenstein Rodan London 1972 p. 14.

change onto its unwilling subjects[83].

The economic activities of the Indian state have been examined more closely in a further extension of new-classical theory based on the notion of rent-seeking and the distortions that have followed from an inappropriate and ineffective regime of economic controls and planning. Bureaucratic controls in India have been seen in the work of Anne Kreuger and others[84] as forming an integral part of rent-seeking society in which the owners of scarce assets (land capital) or privileges (such as import licences) are simply rewarded for this ownership, rather than being forced to earn a return on them by efficient working in an open market. Thus productivity is not increased by competition; instead profits are maintained by limiting the number of rent-holders and closing off alternative routes for access to scarce assets. The result is political stability based on the interests of a narrow range of propertied and favoured groups, but this is accompanied by the economic irrationality of under-utilised industrial capacity, wasteful use of foreign exchange and industrial investment, inappropriate land reform, and a corrupt polity that makes any genuine development almost impossible.

Generally speaking, new-classical accounts of South Asian development identify Indian social and cultural arrangements as inhibitors of growth and change. However, culturalist explanations bring special problems with them, and should not be used on their own without very significant qualification. The apparent non-material spirituality of Hindu life and beliefs that was so often stressed by colonial officials is not a very useful explanatory variable - indeed, many of the most successful Indian businessmen had strong links to religious charities and institutions. Fatalism is stronger when choice is limited, and local cultural systems have often had strong connections to interlinked social, political and economic relationships. As Eric Stokes argued forcefully, agrarian history shows that the demands of economics often overrode the constraints of morality and law in village cultivation arrangements; in some parts of north India, for example, Brahmins did their own ploughing, and Rajput *thakurs* discarded their stereotypical image of indolent rentier pride when economic circumstances provided incentives.[85] Such examples can be matched and multiplied from all other parts of the sub-continent. Culturalist explanations also require us to believe that a unique culture will determine a unique performance and yet the economic consequences of Hinduism for the South Asian economy over the last 200 years or so have not been so singular. South Asia is not a solely Hindu region, yet its modern economic history has a certain unity, and also exhibits striking similarities to other areas, such as Indonesia and China, which have

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[83] Gunnar Myrdal Asian Drama. An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations Harmonds-Worth 1968 Volume II p. 895 ff. There is a convenient summary of these points in B.L.C.Johnson Development in South Asia Harmondswoeth 1983 pp. 16-19.

[84] A. O Kreuger The political Economy of a Rent-Seeking Society American Economic Review 64, 1974.

[85] Eric Stokes, *The Peasant and the Raj. Studies in Agrarian Society and Peasant Rebellion m Colonial India,* Cambridge. 1978. pp.234-6.

a different cultural base. Where variations do exist in the comparative histories of these regions they can better be accounted for by secular factors than by dependence on culturalist explanations. Colonial India certainly exhibited an institutional rigidity in social and economic organisation, but this was not a uniquely Hindu, South Asian or colonial problem -indeed, much of the slow-down in Britain's own economic growth m the second half of the nineteenth century has often been attributed to the same cause. .

The most complete new-classical interpretation of modern Indian economic history to date has been Deepak Lai's analysis of a 'Hindu equilibrium' of cultural stability and economic stagnation.[86] This work provides a functional explanation of Indian social organisation and agricultural systems as a second-best Pareto-efficient response to a specific environment. Lai argues that traditional Hindu society, based around the caste system, was organised to facilitate decision-making under conditions of uncertainty, brought about by the four long-run constraints of labour shortage, political decentralisation in local warrior-states, climatic variability and ecological fragility, and a culture-based undervaluation of merchant activity. This identification of economic stagnation is so aggregated as to be highly misleading, however. Lai uses very general indicators that ignore regional diversity, and assumes changelessness over long periods and large areas, rather than self-cancelling fluctuations in time and space; he also assumes that the uniqueness of Hindu culture produces a unique economic situation in India, ignoring parallel work on labour utilisation in other rice-cultivating regions of Asia that suggest similarities to Indian cases at the local and regional levels.

Such accounts of the South Asian economy assume a uniformity of agrarian social and economic relations based on a unified physical environment. This makes them very difficult to apply to the historical evidence, since historians of localities and regions stress a great variety of ecological circumstances. At the very simplest level, there is a frequently noted division into 'wet' and 'dry' regions (see below, pp. 39-40), with 'wet' regions being characterised by surplus labour and large rentier profits, while farms in 'dry' regions were operated by a recognizable peasantry of owner-cultivators using extensive cultivation to minimise risk and subject to interlinked factor and product markets The distinct input requirements of different food crop also fenced soc.al organisation; it is clear, for example, that classic self-Sufficient., independent peasant family farms are more character-tic of dry- and wheat, than of wet-land rice cultivation. Such accounts as Lai's also assume a straightforward chronology in which development, however slow, has been a cumulative process built on the accretions of the past. In practice, as we will see, both agriculture and industry in India experienced a much more erratic type of progress with he form, nature and efficiency of production systems altering considerably as a result of fluctuating internal and external socio-political and economic circumstances.

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[86] Deepak Lal *The Hindu Equilibrium: Cultural Stability and Economic Stagnation, India ifoo Bc-1980 AD, Volume 1*, Oxford, 1984.

Both Marxian and new-classical approaches demonstrate the increasing unity of capital, commodity and labour markets across the Indian subcontinent, linking the subsistence sector and the commercial economy together. South Asian economic history was no dualistic we cannot identify and distinguish separate 'modern and traditional sectors each with its own institutions and sphere of operations The linkages and interconnections between the markets for agriculture land labour and capital, and between industrial organisation and the control of labour discipline and wages were elaborate, and often intermixed modern' and 'traditional' forms in a complex and subtle way. The imperial economy of colonial South Asia took the form that it did because of the nature of the indigenous economy while the indigenous economy was shaped in turn by the imperial economy Market relations in cash and kind however imperfect inefficient and often exploitative they may have been suffused the South Asian economy as much as any other in the world throughout the eighteenth nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The extent of market penetration the character of the markets that operate and the type of involvement of various economic groups of producers and consumer in them have often been identified as important determinants of production conditions in Indian agriculture since 1947[87] and these concepts provide a useful framework for understanding the modern economic history of colonial South Asia was well. Many of the capital, labour and commodity markets were interlinked, since the availability of land, credit and employment was often concentrated in the hands of the same small groups of agricultural managers and industrial entrepreneurs, although such interlinking was not constant, and could change in type and intensity over rime. In some sectors of the economy, notably in parts of the rural labour market and in mechanised industry and export-import trade, markets were internalised into institutional structures such as customary ***(jajmani)*** service networks or vertically integrated firms. These institutions represented alternatives to market arrangements, and could replace them, or be replaced by them, under certain circumstances. Where transactions costs were particularly high, especially the costs of labour discipline and recruitment, or the diffusion of information and technological capacity, such internalising institutions were common. They could be created to distort or bypass existing market arrangements by substituting tied for free labour in agriculture, for example, or by integrating manufacturing, sales and distribution with the securing of raw material supply in industry. At times, however, these institutions, could also collapse and fail, and by the end of the colonial period many had to besupported or replaced by state agencies.

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[87] Krishna Bharadwaj Production Conditions in Indian Agriculture Cambridge 1974 reprinted in john Harriss (ed.) Rural Development. Yheories of peasant Economy and Agrarian Change London 1982 ch 12: see also her A view of the Commercialization in Indian Agriculture and the Development of Capitalism Journal of Peasant Studies 12 4 1985.

The underlying characteristics of economic growth and development in colonial and post-colonial India were determined by the nature of the markets that decided how any surplus over subsistence was generated, and then divided it between capital, labour, and the state. Imperfections in these markets led to the emergence of public and private economic institutions that altered, replaced and substituted for them over time, affected economic performance and decision-making profoundly, and magnified problems of risk and risk management that were endemic in an underdeveloped economy with high levels of uncertainty. The process of creating economic institutions or markets was not entirely dominated by narrow classes or particular interest groups, but the arrangements that were made tended to favour the few rather than the many, and to reward the owners, or controllers, of scarce resources (land, capital, power) rather than the owners of the plentiful resource, labour. In addition, the colonial regime, which had its own peculiar priorities and purposes, played an important role in both shaping and directing the organisational framework of the economy. Thus the role of political and social power in economic relations was central, and the ideology and scope of the state also played an important role in shaping economic action. While both underconsumptionist and 'rent-seeking' theories focus on important issues, neither are enough, on their own, to analyse the interplay of development and underdevelopment in colonial South Asia fully. We need instead an historical context that can show the pattern of change and *stasis* over time. The chapters that follow will provide this by investigating, in more detail, the indigenous and imperial structures that determined the performance of agriculture, and trade and manufacture, and that shaped the relations between the colonial and post-colonial state and the economy of modern India.

Society causing prolonged and widespread suffering among its constituents. Above all the colonial policy of intensifying demands for land revenue and extracting as large an amount as possible produced a veritable upheaval in Indian villages. In Bengal for example in less than thirty years land revenue collection was raised to nearly double the amount collected under the Mughals. The pattern was repeated in other parts of the country as British rule spread. And aggravating the unhappiness of the farmers was the fact that not even a part of the enhanced revenue was spent on the development of agriculture or the welfare of the cultivator.

Thousand of zamindars and poligars lost control over their land and its revenues either due to the extinction of their rights by the colonial state or by the forced sale of their rights over land because of their inability to meet the exorbitant land revenue demanded. The proud zamindars and poligars resented this loss even more when they were displaced by rank outsiders-government officials and the new men of money – merchants and moneylenders. Thus they as also the old chiefs who had lost their principalities had personal scores to settle with the new rulers.

Peasants and artisans as we have seen earlier had their own reasons to rise up in arms and side with the traditional elite. Increasing demands for land revenue were forcing large numbers of peasants into growing indebtedness or into selling their lands. The new landlords bereft of any traditional paternalism towards their tenants pushed up rents to ruinous heights and evicted them peasantry was reflected in twelve major and numerous minor famines from 1770 to 1857.

The new courts and legal system gave a further fillip to the dispossessors of land and encouraged the rich to oppress the poor. Flogging torture and jailing of the cultivators for arrears of rent or land revenue or interest on debt were quite common. The ordinary people were also hard hit by the prevalence of corruption at the lower levels of the police judiciary and general administration. The petty officials enriched themselves freely at the cost of the poor. The police looted oppressed and tortured the common people at will. William Edwards a British official wrote in 1859 that the police were a scourge to the people and that their oppression and exactions form one of the chief grounds of dissatisfaction with our government.

The ruin of Indian handicraft industries as a result of the imposition of free trade in India and levy of discriminatory tariffs against Indian goods in Britain, pauperized millions of artisans. The misery of the artisans was further compounded by the disappearance of their traditional patrons and buyers, the princes, chieftains, and *zamindars.*

The scholarly and priestly classes were also active in inciting hatred and rebellion against foreign rule. The traditional rulers and ruling elite had financially supported scholars, religious preachers, priests, *pandits* and *maulvis* and men of arts and literature. With the coming of the British and the ruin of the traditional landed and

bureaucratic elite, this patronage came to an end, and all those who had depended on it were impoverished.

Another major cause of the rebellions was the very foreign character of British rule. Like any other people, the Indian people too felt humiliated at being under a foreigner's heel. This feeling of hurt pride inspired efforts to expel the foreigner from their lands.

The civil rebellions began as British rule was established in Bengal and Bihar, and they occurred in area after area as it was incorporated into colonial rule. There was hardly a year without armed opposition or a decade without a major armed rebellion in one part of the country or the other. From 1763 to 1856, there were more than forty major rebellions apart from hundreds of minor ones.

Displaced peasants and demobilized soldiers of Bengal led by religious monks and dispossessed *zamindars* were the first to rise up in the Sanyasi rebellion, made famous by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee in his novel *Anand Math,* that lasted from 1763 to 1800. It was followed by the Chuar uprising which covered five districts of Bengal and Bihar from 1766 to 1772 and then, again, from 1795 to 1816. Other major rebellions in Eastern India were those of Rangpur and Dinajpur, 1783; Bishnupur and Birbhum, 1799; Orissa *zamindars,* 1804-17; and Sambalpur, 1827-40.

In South India, the Raja of Vizianagram revolted in 1794, the *poligars* of Tamil Nadu during the 1790's, of Malabar and coastal Andhra during the first decade of the 19th century, of Parlekamedi during 181314. Dewan Velu Thampi of Travancore organized a heroic revolt in 1805. The Mysore peasants too revolted in 1830-31. There were major uprisings in Vizagapatnam from 1830-34, Ganjam in 1835 and Kurnool in 1846-47.

In Western India, the chiefs of Saurashtra rebelled repeatedly from 1816 to 1832. The Kolis of Gujarat did the same during 1824-28, 1839 And 1849. Maharashtra was in a perpetual state of revolt after the final defeat of the Peshwa. Prominent were the Bhil uprisings, 1878-31 the Kittur uprising led by chinnava 1824 the Satara uprising 1841 and the revolt of the Gadkaris 1844.

Northern India was no less turbulent The present states of Western U.P. and Haryana rose up in arms in 1824 Other major rebellions were those of Bilaspur, 1805; the laluqdars of Aligarh 1814-17; the Bundelas of Jabalpur, 1842; and Khandesh, ,1852. The second Punjab War in 1848- 49 was also in the nature of a popular revolt by the people and the army

These almost continuous rebellions were massive in then totality but were wholly local in their spread and isolated from each other. They were the result of local causes and grievances and were also localized in their effects. They often bore the same character not because they

represented national or common efforts but because they represented common conditions though separated in time and space.

Socially, economically and politically, the semi-feudal leaders of these rebellions were backward looking and traditional in outlook. They still lived in the old world, blissfully unaware and oblivious of the modem world which had knocked down the defences of their society. Their resistance represented no societal alternative. It was centuries-old in form and geological and cultural content. Its basic objective was to restore earlier forms of rule and social relations. Such backward looking and scattered sporadic and disunited uprisings were incapable of fending off or overthrowing foreign rule. The British succeeded in pacifying the rebel areas one by one. They also gave concessions to the less fiery rebel chiefs and *zamindars* m the form of reinstatement, the restoration of their estates and reduction in revenue assessments so long as they agreed to live peacefully under alien authority. The more recalcitrant ones were physically wiped out. Velu Thampi was, for example, publicly hanged even after he was dead.

The suppression of the civil rebellions was a major reason why the Revolt of 1857 did not spread to South India and most of Eastern and Western India. The historical significance of these civil uprisings lies in that they established strong and valuable local traditions of resistance to British rule. The Indian people were to draw inspiration from these traditions in the later nationalist struggle for freedom.

The tribal people, spread over a large part of India, organized hundreds of militant outbreaks and insurrections during the 19th century. These uprisings were marked by immense courage and sacrifice on their part and brutal suppression and veritable butchery on the part of the rulers. The tribals had cause to be upset for a variety of reasons. The colonial administration ended their relative isolation and brought them fully within the ambit of colonialism. It recognized the tribal chiefs as ***zamindars*** and introduced a new system of land revenue and taxation of tribal products. It encouraged the influx of Christian missionaries into the tribal areas Above all, ft introduced a large number of moneylenders, traders and revenue farmers as middlemen among the tribals. These middlemen were the chief instruments for bringing the tribal people within the vortex of the colonial economy and exploitation. The middlemen were outsiders who increasingly took possession of tribal lands and ensnared the tribals in a web of debt. In time, the tribal people increasingly lost their lands and were reduced to the position of agricultural labourers, share-croppers and rack-rented tenants on the land they had earlier brought under cultivation and held on a communal basis.

Colonialism also transformed their relationship with the forest. They had depended on the forest for food, fuel and cattle-feed. They practised shifting cultivation (jhum podu etc.), taking recourse to fresh forest lands when their existing lands showed signs of exhaustion. The colonial government changed all this. It usurped the forest lands and placed restrictions on access to forest products, forest lands and village common lands. It refused to let cultivation shift to new areas.

Oppression and extortion by policemen and other petty officials further aggravated distress among the tribals. The revenue farmers and government agents also intensified and expanded the system of beggar-making the tribals perform unpaid labour.

All this differed in intensity from region to region, but the complete disruption of the old agrarian order of the tribal communities provided the common factor for all the tribal uprisings. These uprisings were broad-based, involving thousands of tribals, often the entire population of a region.

The colonial intrusion and die triumvirate of trader, moneylender and revenue farmer in sum disrupted the tribal identity to a lesser or greater degree. In fact, ethnic ties were a basic feature of the tribal rebellions. The rebels saw themselves not as a discreet class but as having a tribal identity.

At this level the solidarity shown was of a very high order. Fellow tribals were never attacked unless they had collaborated with the enemy.

At the same time, not all outsiders were attacked as enemies. Often there was no violence against the non-tribal poor, who worked in tribal villages in supportive economic roles, or who had social relations with the tribals, such as telis, gwalas, lohars, carpenters, potters, weavers, washermen, barbers, drummers, and bonded labourers and domestic servants of the outsiders. They were not only spared, but were seen as allies. In many cases, the rural poor formed a part of the rebellious tribal bands.

The rebellions normally began at the point where the tribals felt so oppressed that they felt they had no alternative but to fight. This often took the form of spontaneous attacks on outsiders, looting their property and expelling them from their villages. This led to clashes with the colonial authorities. When this happened, the tribals began to move towards armed resistance and elementary organization.

Often, religious and charismatic leaders — messiahs — emerged at this stage and promised divine intervention and an end to their suffering at the hands of the outsiders, and asked their fellow tribals to rise and rebel against foreign authority. Most of these leaders claimed to derive their authority from God. They also often claimed that they possessed magical powers, for example, the power to make the enemies' bullets ineffective. Filled with hope and confidence, the tribal masses tended to follow these leaders to the very end.

The warfare between the tribal rebels and the British armed forces was totally unequal. On one side were drilled regiments armed with the latest weapons and on the other were men and women fighting in roving bands armed with primitive

weapons such as stones, axes, spears and bows and arrows, believing in the magical powers of their commanders. The tribals died in lakhs in this unequal warfare.

Among the numerous tribal revolts, the Santhal *hool* or uprising was the most massive. The Santhals, who live in the area between Bhagalpur and Rajmahal, known as Daman-i-koh, rose in revolt; made a determined attempt to expel the outsiders — the *dikus* — and proclaimed the complete 'annihilation' of the alien regime. The social conditions which drove them to insurrection were described by a contemporary in the *Calcutta Review* as follows: 'Zamindars, the police, the revenue and court alas have exercised a combined system of extortions, oppressive exactions, forcible dispossession of property, abuse and personal violence and a vanety of petty tyrannies upon the timid and yielding Santhals. Usurious interest on loans of money ranging from 50 to 500 per cent; false measures at the haut and the market, wilful and uncharitable trespass by the rich by means of their untethered cattle, tattoos, ponies and even elephants, on the growing crops of the poorer race; and such like illegalities have been prevalent"

The Santhals considered the dikus and government servants morally corrupt being given to beggary, stealing, lying and drunkenness.

By 1854, the tribal heads, the majhis and parganites, had begun to meet and discuss the possibility of revolting. Stray cases of the robbing of zamindars and moneylenders began to occur. The tribal leaders called an assembly of nearly 6000 Santhals, representing 400 villages, at Bhaganidihi on 30 June 1855. It was decided to raise the banner of revolt, get rid of the outsiders and their colonial masters once and for all, the usher in *Satyug*, 'The Reign of Truth,' and 'True Justice.'

The Santhals believed that their actions had the blessings of God. Sido and Kanhu, the principal rebel leaders, claimed that Thakur (God) had communicated with them and told them to take up arms and fight for independence. Sido told the authorities in a proclamation. 'The ThaCoor has ordered me saving that the country is not Sahibs ... The Thacoor himself will fight. "Therefore, you Sahibs and Soldiers (will) fight the Thacoor himself.

The leaders mobilized the Santhal men and women by organizing huge processions through the villages accompanied by drummers and other musicians. The leaders rode at the head on horses and elephants and in palkis. Soon nearly 60,000 Santhals had been mobilized. Forming bands of 1,500 to 2,000, but rallying in many thousands at the call of drums on particular occasions, they attacked the mahajans and zamindars and their houses, police stations, railway construction sites, the dak (post) carriers — in fact all the symbols of diku exploitation and colonial power.

The Santhal insurrection was helped by a large number of non-tribal and poor dikus. Gwalas (milkmen) and others helped the rebels with provisions and services; lohars (blacksmiths) accompanied the rebel bands, keeping their weapons in good shape.

Once the Government realized the scale of the rebellion, it organized a major military campaign against the rebels. It mobilized tens of regiments under the command of a major-general declared Martial law in the affected areas and offered rewards of upto Rs. 10,000 for the captured of various leaders.

The rebellion was crushed ruthlessly. More than 15,000 Santhals were killed while tens of villages were destroyed. Sido was betrayed and captured and killed in August 1855 while Kanhu was arrested by accident at the tail-end of the rebellion in February 1866. And the Rajmahal Hills were drenched with the blood of the fighting Santhal peasantry. One typical instance of the heroism of Santhal rebles has been narrated by L.S.S.O' Malley. They showed the most reckless courage never knowing when they were beaten and refusing to surrender. On one occasion forty-five Santhals took refuge in a mud hut which they held against the Sepoys. Volley after volley was fired into it ... Each time the Santhals replied with a discharge of arrows. At last when their fire ceased the Sepoy called on him to surrender whereupon the old man rushed upon him and cut him down with his battle axe.

I shall describe briefly three other major tribal rebellions. The Kols of Chhotanagpur rebelled from 1820 to 1837 Thousands of them were massacred before British authority could be re-imposed. The hill tribesmen of rampa in coastal Andhra revolted in March 1879 against the depredations of the government-supported mansabdar and the new restrictive forest regulations. The authorities had to mobilize regiments of infantry a squadron of cavalry and two companies of sappers and miners before the rebels numbering several thousands could be defeated by the end of 1880.

The rebellion (ulgulan) of the Mundra tribesmen led by Birsa Munda occurred during 1899-1900. For over thirty years the Munda sardars had been struggling against the destruction of their system of common land holding by the intrusion of jagirdars thikadars (revenue farmers) and merchant moneylenders.

Birsa born in a poor share-cropper household in 1874 had a vision of god in 1895. He declared himself to be a divine messenger possessing miraculous healing powers. Thousand gathered around him seeing in him a messiah with a new religious massage. Under the influence of the *sardars,* the religious movement soon acquired an agrarian and political content. Birsa began to move from village to village, organizing rallies and mobilizing his followers on religious and political grounds. On Christmas Eve, 1899, Birsa proclaimed a rebellion to establish Munda rule in the land and encouraged 'the killing of *thikadars* and *jagirdars* and Rajas and *Hakims* (rulers) and Christians.' *Satyug* would be established in place of the present-day *Kalyug.* He

declared that 'there was going to be a fight with the *dikus,* the ground would be as red as the red flag with their blood."' The non-tribal poor were not to be attacked.

To bring about liberation, Birsa gathered a force of 6,000 Mundas armed with swords, spears, battle-axes, and bows and arrows. He was, however, captured in the beginning of February 1900 and he died in jail in June. The rebellion had failed. But Birsa entered the realms of legend.

Peasant Movements and Uprisings after 1857

It is worth taking a look at the effects of colonial exploitation of the Indian peasants. Colonial economic policies, the new land revenue system, the colonial administrative and judicial systems, and the ruin of handicrafts leading to the over-crowding of land, transformed the agrarian structure and impoverished the peasantry. In the vast *zamindari* areas, the peasants were left to the tender mercies of the *zamindars* who rack-rented them and compelled them to pay the illegal dues and perform *begar*. In *Ryotwari* areas, the Government itself levied heavy land revenue. This forced the peasants to borrow money from the moneylenders. Gradually, over large areas, the actual cultivators were reduced to the status of tenants-at-will, share-croppers and landless labourers, while their lands, crops and cattle passed into the hands of landlords, trader-moneylenders and rich peasants.

When the peasants could take it no longer, they resisted against the oppression and exploitation; and, they found whether their target was the indigenous exploiter or the colonial administration, that their red enemy, after the barriers were down, was the colonial state.

One form of elemental protest, especially when individuals and small groups found that collective action was not possible though their social condition was becoming intolerable, was to take to crime. Many dispossessed peasants took to robbery, dacoity and what has been called social banditry, preferring these to starvation and social degradation.

The most militant and widespread of the peasant movements was the Indigo Revolt of 1859-60. The indigo planters, nearly all Europeans, compelled the tenants to grow indigo which they processed in factories set up in rural *(mofussil)* areas. From the beginning, indigo was grown under an extremely oppressive system which involved great loss to the cultivators. The planters forced the peasants to take a meager amount as advance and enter into fraudulent contracts. The price paid for the indigo plants was far below the market price. The comment of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, J.B. Grant, was that 'the root of the whole question is the struggle to make the *raiyats* grow indigo plant, without paying them the price of it." The peasant was forced to grow indigo on the best land he had whether or not he wanted to devote his land and labour to more paying crops like rice. At the time of delivery, he was cheated even of the due low price. He also had to pay regular bribes to the planter's officials He was forced to accept an advance. Often he was not in a position to repay it, but even if he could he was not allowed to do so. The advance was used by the planters to compel him to go on cultivating indigo.

Since the enforcement of forced and fraudulent contracts through the courts was a difficult and prolonged process, the planters resorted to a reign of terror to coerce the peasants. Kidnapping, illegal confinement in factory godowns, flogging, attacks on women and children, carrying off cattle, looting, burning and demolition of houses and destruction of crops and fruit trees were some of the methods used by the planters. They hired or maintained bands of *iathiyals* (armed retainers) for the purpose.

In practice, the planters were also above the law. With a few exceptions, the magistrates, mostly European, favoured the planters with whom they dined and hunted regularly. Those, few who tried to be fair were soon transferred. Twenty-nine planters and a solitary Indian *zamindar* were appointed as Honorary Magistrates in 1857, which gave birth to the popular saying je *rakhak se bhakak'* (Our protector is also our devourer).

The discontent of indigo growers in Bengal boiled over in the autumn of 1859 when their case seemed to get Government support Misreading an official letter and exceeding his authority, Hem Chandra Kar Deputy Magistrate of Kalaroa, published on 17 August a proclamation to policemen that in case of disputes relating to Indigo *Ryots,* they *(ryots)* shall retain possession of their own lands, and shall sow on them what crops they please, and the Police will be careful that no Indigo Planter nor anyone else be able to interface in the matter.'2

The news of Kar's proclamation spread all over Bengal, and peasants felt that the time for overthrowing the hated system had come. Initially, the peasants made an attempt to get redressal through peaceful means. They sent numerous petitions to the authorities and organized peaceful demonstrations. Their anger exploded in September 1859 when they asserted their right not to grow Indigo under duress and resisted the physical pressure of the planters and their *lathiyals* backed by the police and the courts.

The beginning was made by the *ryots* of Govindpur village in Nadia district when, under the leadership of Digambar Biswas and Bishnu Biswas, ex-employees of a planter, they gave up indigo cultivation. And when, on 13 September, the planter sent a band of 100 *lathiyals* to attack their village, they organized a counter force armed with lathis and spears and fought back.

The peasant disturbances and indigo strikes spread rapidly to other areas. The peasants refused to take advances and enter into contracts, pledged not to sow indigo, and defended themselves from the planters' attacks with whatever weapons came to hand — spears, slings, lathis, bows and arrows, bricks, bhel-fruit, and earthen-pots (thrown by women).

The indigo strikes and disturbances flared up again in the spring of 1860 and encompassed all the indigo districts of Bengal. Factory after factory was attacked by hundreds of peasants and village after village bravely defended itself. In many cases,

the efforts of the police to intervene-and arrest peasant leaders were met with an attack on policemen and police posts.

The planters then attacked with another weapon, their *zamindari* powers. They threatened the rebellious *ryots* with eviction or enhancement of rent. The *ryots* replied by going on a rent strike. They refused to pay the enhanced rents; and they physically resisted attempts to evict them. They also gradually learnt to use the legal machinery to enforce their rights. They joined together and raised funds to fight court cases filed against them, and they initiated legal action on their own against the planters. They also used the weapon of social boycott to force a planter's servants to leave him.

Ultimately, the planters could not withstand the united resistance of the *ryots,* and they gradually began to close their factories. The cultivation of indigo was virtually wiped out from the districts of Bengal by the end of I860.

A major reason for the success of the Indigo Revolt was the tremendous initiative, cooperation, organization and discipline of the ryots. Another was the complete unity among Hindu and Muslim peasants. Leadership for the movement was provided by the more well-off ryots and in some cases by petty zamindars, moneylenders and ex-employees of the planters.

A significant feature of the Indigo Revolt was the role of the intelligentsia of Bengal which organized a powerful campaign in support of the rebellious peasantry. It carried on newspaper campaigns, organized mass meetings, prepared memoranda on peasants' grievances and supported them in their legal battles. Outstanding in this respect was the role of Harish Chandra Mukherji, editor of die Hindoo Patriot. He published regular reports from his correspondents in the rural areas on planters' oppression, officials' partisanship and peasant resistance. He himself wrote with passion, anger and deep knowledge of the problem which he raised to a high political plane. Revealing an insight into the historical and political significance of the Indigo Revolt, he wrote in May 1860: 'Bengal might well be proud of its peasantry ... Wanting power, wealth, political knowledge and even leadership, the peasantry of Bengal have brought about a revolution inferior in magnitude and importance to none that has happened in the social history of any other country . . . With the Government against them, the law against them, the tribunals against them, the Press against them, they have achieved a success of which the benefits will reach all orders and the most distant generations of our countrymen.'

Din Bandhu Mitra's play, Neel Darpan, was to gain great fame for vividly portraying the oppression by the planters.

The intelligentsia's role in die Indigo Revolt was to have an abiding impact on the emerging nationalist intellectuals. In their very political childhood they had given support to a popular

peasant movement against the foreign planters. This was to establish a tradition with long term implications for the national movement

Missionaries were another group which extended active support to the indigo ryots in their struggle.

The Government's response to the Revolt was rather restrained and not as harsh as in the case of civil rebellions and tribal uprisings. It had just undergone the harrowing experience of the Santhal uprising and the Revolt of 1857. It was also able to see, in time, the changed temper of the peasantry and was influenced by the support extended to the Revolt by the intelligentsia and the missionaries. It appointed a commission to inquire into the problem of indigo cultivation. Evidence brought before the Indigo Commission and its final report exposed the coercion and corruption underlying the entire system of indigo cultivation. The 'result was the mitigation of the worst abuses of the system. The Government issued a notification in November 1860 that *ryots* could not be compelled to sow indigo and that it would ensure that all disputes were settled by legal means. But the planters were already closing down the factories — they felt that they could not make their enterprises pay without the use of force and fraud.

Large parts of East Bengal were engulfed by agrarian unrest during the 1870s and early 1880s. The unrest was caused by the efforts of the *zamindars* to enhance rent beyond legal limits and to prevent the tenants from acquiring occupancy rights under Act X of 1859. This they tried to achieve through illegal coercive methods such as forcell (eviction and seizure of crops and cattle as well as by dragging the tenants into costly litigation in the courts.

The peasants were no longer in a mood to tolerate such oppression. In May 1873, an agrarian league or combination was formed in Yusufshahi Parganah in Pabna district to resist the demands of the *zamindars*. The league organized mass meetings of peasants. Large crowds 'of peasants would gather and march through villages frightening *the-zamindars* and appealing to other peasants to join them. The league organized a rent-strike — the *ryots* were to refuse to pay the enhanced rents — and challenged the *zamindars* in the courts. Funds were raised from the *ryots* to meet the costs. The struggle gradually spread throughout Pabna and then to the other districts of East Bengal. Everywhere agrarian leagues were organized, rents were withheld and *zamindars* fought *m* the courts. The main form of struggle was that of legal resistance. There was very little violence — it only occurred when the *zamindars* tried to compel the *ryots* to submit to their terms by force. There were only a few cases of looting of the houses of the *zamindars*. A few attacks on police stations took place and the peasants also resisted attempts to execute court decrees But such cases were rather rare. Hardly any *zamindar* or *zaminda'rs* agent
was killed or seriously injured. In the course of the movement, the *ryots* developed a strong awareness of the law and their legal rights and the ability to combine and form associations for peaceful agitation.

Though peasant discontent smouldered till 1885, many of the disputes were settled partially under official pressure and persuasion and partially out of the *zamindar's* fear that the united peasantry would drag them into prolonged and costly litigation. Many peasants were able to acquire occupancy rights and resist enhanced rents.

The Government rose to the defence of the *zamindars* wherever violence took place. Peasants were then arrested on a large scale. But it assumed a position of neutrality as far as legal battles or peaceful agitations were concerned. The Government also promised to undertake legislation to protect the tenants from the worst aspects of *zamindari* oppression, a promise it fulfilled however imperfectly in 1885 when the Bengal Tenancy Act was passed.

What persuaded the *zamindars* and the colonial regime to reconcile themselves to the movement was the fact that its aims were limited to the redressal of the immediate grievances of the peasants and the enforcement of the existing legal rights and norms. It was not aimed at the *zamindari* system. It also did not have at any stage an anti-colonial political edge. The agrarian leagues kept within the bounds of law, used the legal machinery to fight the *zamindars,* and raised no anti-British demands. The leaders often argued that they were against *zamindars* and not the British. In fact, the leaders raised the slogan that the peasants want 'to be the *ryots* of Her Majesty the Queen and of Her only.' For this reason, official action was based on the enforcement of the Indian Penal Code and it did not take the form of armed repression as in the case of the Santhal and Munda uprisings.

Once again the Bengal peasants showed complete Hindu-Muslim solidarity, even though the majority of the *ryots* were Muslim and the majority of *zamindars* Hindu. There was also no effort to create peasant solidarity on the grounds of religion or caste.

In this case, too, a number of young Indian intellectuals supported the peasants' cause. These included Bankim Chandra Chatterjea and R.C. Dutt. Later, in the early 1880s, during the discussion of the Bengal Tenancy Bill, the Indian Association, led by Surendranath Banerjea, Anand Mohan Bose and Dwarkanath Ganguli, campaigned for the rights of tenants, helped form *ryot'* unions, and organized huge meetings of upto 20,000 peasants in the districts in support of the Rent Bill. The Indian Association and many of the nationalist newspapers went further than the Bill. They asked for permanent fixation of the tenant's rent. They warned that since the Bill would confer occupancy rights even on ram-cultivators, it would lead to the growth of middlemen — the *jotedars* — who would be as oppressive as the *zamindars* so far as the actual activators were concerned. They, therefore, demanded that the right of occupancy should go with actual cultivation of the soil, that is, in most cases to the under-*ryots* and the tenants-at-will.

A major agrarian outbreak occurred in the Poona and Ahmednagar districts of Maharashtra in 1875. Here, as part of the Ryotwari system, land revenue was settled directly with the

peasant who was also recognized as the owner of his land. Like the peasants in other Ryotwari areas, the Deccan peasant also found it difficult to pay land revenue without getting into the clutches of the moneylender and increasingly losing his land. This led to growing tension between the peasants and the moneylenders most of whom were outsiders — Marwaris or Gujaratis.

Three other developments occurred at this time. During the early 1860s, the American Civil War had led to a rise in cotton exports which had pushed up prices. The end of the Civil War in 1864 brought about an acute depression in cotton exports and a crash in prices. The ground slipped from under the peasants' feet. Simultaneously, in 1867, the Government raised land revenue by nearly 50 per cent. The situation was worsened by a succession of bad harvests.

To pay the land revenue under these conditions, the peasants had to go to the money lender who took the opportunity to further tighten his grip on the peasant and his land. The peasant began to turn against the perceived cause of his misery, the moneylender. Only a spark was needed to kindle the fire.

A spontaneous protest movement began in December 1874 in Kardah village in Sirur *taluq*. When the peasants of the village failed to convince the local moneylender, Kalooram, that he should not act on a count decree and pull down a peasant's house, they organized a complete social boycott of the 'outsider' moneylenders to compel them to accept their demands in a peaceful manner. They refused to buy from their shops. No peasant would cultivate their fields. The *bullotedars* (village servants) — barbers, washermen, carpenters, ironsmiths, shoemakers and others would not serve them. Mo domestic servant would work in their houses and when the socially isolated moneylenders decided to run away to the *taluq* headquarters, nobody would agree to drive their carts. The peasants also imposed social sanctions against those peasants and *bullotedars* who would not join the boycott of moneylenders. This social boycott spread rapidly to the villages of Poona, Ahmednagar, Sholapur and Satara districts.

The social boycott was soon transformed into agrarian riots when it did not prove very effective. On 12 May, peasants gathered in Supa, in Bhimthari *taluq,* on the bazar day and began a systematic attack on the moneylenders' houses and shops. They seized and publicly burnt debt bonds and deeds — signed under pressure, in ignorance, or through fraud — decrees, and other documents dealing with their debts. Within days the disturbances spread to other villages of the Poona and Ahmednagar districts.

There was very little violence in this settling of accounts. Once the moneylenders' instruments of oppression — debt bonds — were surrendered, no need for further violence was felt In most places, the 'riots' were demonstrations of popular feeling and of the peasants' newly acquired unity and strength. Though moneylenders' houses and shops were looted and burnt in Supa, this did not occur in other places.

The Government acted with speed and soon succeeded in repressing the movement. The active phase of the movement lasted about three weeks, though stray incidents occurred for another month or two. As in the case of the Pabna Revolt, the Deccan disturbances had very limited objectives. There was once again an absence of anti-colonial consciousness. It was, therefore, possible for the colonial regime to extend them a certain protection against the moneylenders through the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act of 1879.

Once again, the modem nationalist intelligentsia of Maharashtra supported the peasants' cause. Already, in 1873-74, the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, led by Justice Ranade, had organized a successful campaign among the peasants, as well as at Poona and Bombay, against the land revenue settlement of 1867. Under its impact, a large number of peasants had refused to pay the enhanced revenue. This agitation had generated a mentality of resistance among the peasants which contributed to the rise of peasant protest in 1875. The Sabha as well as many of the nationalist Newspapers also supported the D.A.R Bill.

Peasant resistance also developed in other parts of the country. Mappila outbreaks were endemic in Malabar. Vasudev Balwant Phadke, an educated clerk, raised a Ramosi peasant force of about 50 in Maharashtra during 1879, and organized social banditry on a significant scale. The Kuka Revolt in Punjab was led by Baba Ram Singh and had elements of a messianic movement. It was crushed when 49 of the rebels were blown up by a cannon in 1872. High land revenue assessment led to a series of peasant riots in the plains of Assam during 1893-94. Scores were killed in brutal firings and bayonet charges.

There was a certain shift in the nature of peasant movements after 1857. Princes, chiefs and landlords having been crushed or co-opted, peasants emerged as the main force in agrarian movements. They now fought directly for their own demands, centered almost wholly on economic issues, and against their immediate enemies, foreign planters and indigenous *zamindars* and moneylenders. Their struggles were directed towards specific and limited objectives and redressal of particular grievances. They did not make colonialism their target. Nor was their objective the ending of the system qf-their subordination and exploitation. They did not aim at 'turning the world upside down.'

The territorial reach of these movements was also limited. They were confined to particular localities with no mutual communication or linkages. They also lacked continuity of struggle or long-term organization. Once the specific objectives of a movement were achieved, its organization, as also peasant solidarity built around it, dissolved and disappeared. Thus, the Indigo strike, the Pabna agrarian leagues and the social-boycott movement of the Deccan *ryots* left behind no successors. Consequently, at no stage did these movements threaten British supremacy or even undermine it.

Peasant protest after 1857 often represented an instinctive and spontaneous response of the peasantry to its social condition, ft was the result of excessive and unbearable oppression,

undue and unusual deprivation and exploitation, and a threat to the peasant's existing, established position. The peasant often rebelled only when he felt that it was not possible to carry on in the existing manner.

He was also moved by strong notions of legitimacy, of what was justifiable and what was not That is why he did not fight for land ownership or against landlordism but against eviction and undue enhancement of rent He did not object to paying interest on the sums he had borrowed; he hit back against fraud and chicanery by the moneylender and when the latter went against tradition in depriving him of his land. He did not deny the state's right to collect a tax on land but objected when the level of taxation overstepped all traditional bounds. He did not object to the foreign planter becoming his *zamindar* but resisted the planter when he took away his freedom to decide what crops to grow and refused to pay him a proper price for his crop.

The peasant also developed a strong awareness of his legal rights and asserted them in and outside the courts. And if an effort was made to deprive him of his legal rights by extra-legal means or by manipulation of the law and law courts, he countered with extra-legal means of his own. Quite often, he believed that the legally-constituted authority approved his actions or at least supported his claims and cause. In all the three movements discussed here, he acted in the name of this authority, the *sarkar.*

In these movements, the Indian peasants showed great courage and a spirit of sacrifice, remarkable organizational abilities, and a solidarity that cut across religious and caste lines. They were also able to wring considerable concessions from the colonial state. The latter, too, not being directly challenged, was willing to compromise and mitigate the harshness of the agrarian system though within the broad limits of the colonial economic and political structure. In this respect, the colonial regime's treatment of the post-1857 peasant rebels was qualitatively different from its treatment of the participants in the civil rebellions, the Revolt of 1857 and the tribal uprisings which directly challenged colonial political power.

A major weakness of the 19th century peasant movements was the lack of an adequate understanding of colonialism — of colonial economic structure and the colonial state — and of the social framework of die movements themselves. Nor did the 19th century peasants possess a new ideology and a new social, economic and political programme based on an analysis of the newly constituted colonial society. Their struggles, however militant, occurred within the framework of the old societal order.

They lacked a positive conception of an alternative society - a conception which would unite the people in a common struggle on a wide regional and all-India plane and help develop long-term political movement. An all-India leadership capable of evolving a strategy of struggle that would unify and mobilize peasants and other

sections of society for nation-wide political activity could be formed only on the basis of such a new conception such a fresh vision of society. In the absence of such a new ideology programme leadership and strategy of struggle it was not too difficult for the colonial state on the one hand to reach a conciliation and clam down the rebellious peasants by the grant of some concessions and, on the other hand, to suppress them with the full use of *its* force This weakness was of course, not a blemish on the character of the peasantry winch was perhaps incapable of grasping on its own the new and complex phenomenon of colonialism. That needed the efforts of a modern intelligentsia which was itself just coming into existence.

Most of these weaknesses were overcome in the 20th century when peasant dement was merged with the general anti-imperialist discontent and their political activity became a part of the wider anti-imperialist' movement. And, of course, the peasants' participation in the larger national movement not only strengthened the fight against the foreigner it also simultaneously enabled them to organize Powerful struggles around their class demands and to create modem peasant organizations

How Does Culture Matter?

AMARTYA SEN

Introduction

Sociologists, anthropologists, and historians have often commented on the tendency of economists to pay inadequate attention to culture in investigating the operation of societies in particular. While we can consider many counterexamples to the alleged neglect of culture by economists, beginning at least with Adam Smith (1776/1976,1790/1976), John Stuart Mill (1859/1974, 1861/1962), or Alfred Marshall (1891), nevertheless, as a general criticism, the charge is, to a considerable extent, justified.

This neglect (or perhaps more accurately, comparative indifference) is worth remedying, and economists can fruitfully pay more attention to the influence of culture on economic and social matters. Further, development agencies such as the World Bank may also reflect, at least to some extent, this neglect, if only because they are so predominately influenced by the thinking of economists and financial experts. The economist' skepticism of the role of culture may thus be indirectly reflected in the outlooks and approaches of institutions like the World Bank. No matter how serious this neglect is (and here assessments can differ), the cultural dimension of development requires closer scrutiny in development analysis. It is important to investigate the different ways- and they can be very diverse- in which culture should be taken into account in examining the challenges of development, and in assessing the demands of sound economic strategies.

The issue is not whether culture matters, to consider the title of an important and highly successful book jointly edited by Lawrence Harrison and Samuel Huntington (2000). That it must be, given the pervasive influence of culture in human life. The real issue, rather, is how-not whether- culture matters. What are the different ways in which culture may influence development? How can the influence be better under-stood, and how might they modify or alter the development policies that seem appropriate? The interest lies in the nature and forms of the connections and on their implications for action and policy, not merely in the general-and hardly deniable-belief that culture does matter.

I discuss these "how" questions in this essay, but in the process I must also take up some "how not" questions. There is some evidence, I shall argue, that in the anxiety to take adequate note of the role of culture, there is sometimes a temptation to take rather formulaic and simplistic views of the impact of culture on the process of development. For example, there seem to be many supporters of the belief- held explicitly or by implication- that the fates of countries are effectively sealed by the

nature of their respective cultures. This would be not only a heroic oversimplification, but it would also entail some assignment of hopelessness to countries that are seen as having the "wrong" kind of culture. This is not just politically and ethically repulsive, but more immediately, it is, I would argue, also epistemic nonsense. So a second object of this essay is to take up these "how not" issues.

The third object of the chapter is to discuss the role of learning from each other in the field of culture. Even though such transmission and education may be an integral part of the process of development, their role is frequently underestimated. Indeed, since each culture is often taken, not implausibly, to be unique, there can be a tendency to take a somewhat insular view of culture. In understanding the process of development, this can be particularity deceptive and substantively counterproductive. Indeed, one of the most important roles of culture lies in the possibility of learning from each other, rather than celebrating or lamenting the frigidly delineated cultural boxes in which the people of the world are firmly classified by muscular taxonomists.

Finally, while discussing the importance of intercultural and inter country communication, I must also discuss the threat-real or perceived- of globalization and the asymmetry of power in the contemporary world. The view that local cultures are in danger of destruction has often been expressed, and the belief that something should be done to resist this can have considerable plausibility. How this possible threat should be under-stood and what can be done to address- and if necessary counter- it are also important subjects for development analysis. That is the fourth and final issue that I intend to scrutinize.

Connections

It is particularly important to identify the different ways in which culture can matter to development (Rao and Walton, this volume; Wolfensohn 2000). The following categories would seem to have some immediacy as well as far-reaching relevance.

Culture as a constitutive part of development. We can begin with the question: what is development for? The furtherance of well-being and freedoms that we seek in development cannot but include the enrichment of human lives through literature, music, fine arts, and other forms of cultural expression and practice, which we have reason to value. When Julius Caesar said of Cassius, "He hears no music: seldom he smiles," this was not meant to be high praise for Cassius's quality of life. To have a high GNP per head but little music, arts, literature, etc., would not amount to a major developmental success. In one form or another, culture engulfs our lives, our desires, our frustrations, our ambitions, and the freedoms that we seek. The freedom and opportunity for cultural activities are among the basic freedoms the enhancement of which can be seen to be constitutive of development.

Economically remunerative cultural activities and objects. Various activities that are economically remunerative may be directly or indirectly dependent on cultural facilities and more generally on the cultural environment. The linkage of tourism with cultural sites (including historical ones) is obvious enough The presence or absence of crime or welcoming traditions may also be critical to tourism and in general to domestic as well as cross-boundary interactions. Music, dancing, and other cultural activities, may also have a large commercial- often global-market. The presence of centres of such artistic activities can, in addition, help to attract people to particular countries or regions, with various indirect effects.

There can, of course, be room for doubt as to whether cultural- including religious- objects or sites should be used for the purpose of earning money, and it may well be decided that in some cases, in which the significance of the objects or sites are threatened by commercial use, the opportunity of darning an income should be forgone. But even after excluding commercial uses that can be threatening, there will tend to remain plenty of other opportunities to combine economic use with cultural pursuits. Furthermore, people who come to visit well-administered sites of cultural or religious importance, without any direct commercial involvement, could still, indirectly, boost the tourist trade of the country or region as a whole

Cultural factors influence economic behavior. Even though some economists have been tempted by the idea that all human beings behave in much the same way (for example, relentlessly maximize their self-interest defined in a thoroughly insulated way), there is plenty of evidence to indicate that this is not in general so. Cultural influences can' make a major difference to work ethics, responsible conduct, spirited motivation, dynamic management, Entrepreneurial initiatives, willingness to take risks, and a variety of other aspects of human behavior which can be critical to economic success (Sen 1973, 1982, Basu 1980 Hirschman 1982; Margolis 1982; Akerlof 1984; Frank 1985, 1988; Granovetter 1985; Elster 1986; Mansbridge 1990; Ostrom 1990, 1998; Greif 1994a,b; Brittan and Hamlin 1995; Fukuyama 1995; Zamagni 1995; Becker 1996; Hausman and McPherson 1996; Frey I997a,b; Ben-Ner and r^utierman 1998; Akerlof and Kranton 20O0;Throsby 2001).

Also, successful operation of an exchange economy depends on mutual trust and implicit norms. When these behavioral modes are plentifully there, it is easy to overlook their role. But when they nave to be cultivated; that lacuna can be a major barrier to economic success. There are plenty of examples of the problems faced in precapitalist economies because of the underdevelopment of basic virtues of commerce and business.

The culture of behavior relates to many other features of economic success. It relates, for example, to the prevalence or absence of economic corruption and its linkages with organized crime. In Italian discussions on this subject, in which I was privileged to take part through advising the Anti-Mafia Cornmission of the Italian

parliament, the role and reach of implicit values was much discussed. Culture also has an important role in encouraging environment-friendly behavior (Ostrom 1990, 1998; Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1993; Puntam 1993). The behavioral contribution of culture would vary with the challenges encountered in the process of economic development.

Culture and political participation: Participation in civil interactions and political activities is influenced by cultural conditions. The tradition of public discussion and participatory interactions can be very critical to the process of politics, and can be important for the establishment, preservation, and practice of democracy. The culture of participation can be a critical civic virtue, as was extensively discussed by Condorcet, among other leading thinking of European Enlightenment (Condorcet 1795/1955; Hume 1777/1966; Smith 1790/1976).

Aristotle did, of course, point out that human beings tend to have a natural inclination toward civil interaction with each other. And yet the extent of political participation can vary between societies. In particular, political inclinations can be suppressed not only by authoritarian rules and restrictions, but also by a "culture of fear" that political suppression can generate. There can also be a "culture of indifference" drawing on skepticism that turns into apathy Political participation is critically important for development, both through its effects on the assessment of ways and means, and even through its role in the formation and consolidation of values in terms of which development has to be assessed (Sen 1999).

Social solidarity and association: Aside from economic interactions and political participation, even the operation of social solidarity and mutual support can be strongly influenced by culture. The success of social living is greatly dependent on what people may spontaneously do for each other. This can profoundly influence the working of the society, including the care of its less fortunate members as well as preservation and guardian- ship of common assets. The sense of closeness to others in the community can be a major asset for that community The advantages flowing from solidarity and supportive interactions have received much attention recently through the literature on "social capital" (Ostrom 1990, 1998; Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1993; Putnam 1993).

This is an important new area of social investigation. There is, however, a need to scrutinize the nature of "social capital" as "capital"—in the sense of a general purpose resource (as capital is taken to be). The same sentiments and inclinations can actually work in opposite directions, depending on the nature of the group involved. For example, solidarity within a particular group (for example, long-term residents of a region) can go with a less than friendly view of nonmembers of that group (such as new immigrants).The influence of the same community-centered thinking can be both positive for intercommunity relations and negative in generating or sustaining exclusionary tendencies (including violent "anti-immigrant" sentiments and actions, as can be observed in some regions of impeccable "within

community "solidarity). Identity-based thinking can have dichotomous features, since a strong sense of group affiliation can have a cementing role within that group while encouraging rather severe treatment of nonmembers (seen as "others" who do not "belong"). If this dichotomy is right, then it may be a mistake to treat "social capital" as a general-purpose asset (as capital is, in general, taken to be), rather than as an asset for some relations and a liability for others. There is, thus, room for some searching scrutiny of the nature and operation of the important, but in some ways problematic, concept of "social capital."

Cultural sites and recollection of past heritage: Another constructive possibility is the furtherance of a clearer and broader understanding of a country's or community's past through systematic exploration of its cultural history. For example, by supporting historical excavations, explorations and related research, development programs can help to facilitate a fuller appreciation of the breadth of—and internal variations within—particular cultures and traditions. History often includes much greater variety of cultural influences and traditions than tends to be allowed by intensely political—and frequently a historical—interpretations of the present When this is the case, historical objects, sites and records can help to offset some of the frictions of confrontational modem politics.

For example, Arab history includes a long tradition of peaceful relation with Jewish populations. Similarly, Indonesian past carries powerful records of simultaneous flourishing of Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian cultures, side by side with the Islamic traditions. Butrint in Albania as a historical site shows flourishing presence of Greek, Roman, and later Christian cultures, as well as Islamic history. The highlighting of a diverse past that may go with the excavation, preservation, and accessibility of historical objects and sites can, thus, have a possible role in promoting toleration of diversity in contemporary settings, and in countering confrontational use of "monocultural" readings of a nation's past.

For example, the recent attempt by Hindu activists to see India as just a "Hindu country, in which practitioners of other religions must have a less privileged position, clashes with the great diversity of Indian history. This includes a thousand years of Buddhist predominance (with sites ah over India), a long history of Jain culture, conspicuous presence of Christians from the fourth century and of Parsees from the eighth, Muslim settlements of Arab.traders in South India from about the same time, massive interactions between Muslims and Hindus all over the country (including new departures in painting, music, literature, and architecture), the birth and flourishing of Sikhism (as a new Indian religion that drew on but departed from previous ones), and so on. The recollection of history can be a major ally in the cultivation of toleration and celebration of diversity, and these are-directly and indirectly-among important features of development.

Cultural influences on value formation and evolution: Not only is it in the case that cultural factors figure among the ends and means of developments, they can also

have a central role even in the formation of values. This is turn can be influential in the identification of our ends and the recognition of plausible and acceptable instruments to achieve those ends For example open public discussion—itself a cultural achievement of significance—can be powerfully influential in the emergence of new norms and fresh priorities.

Indeed, value formation is an interactive process, and the culture of talking and listening can play a significant part in making these interactions possible. As new standard, emerge, it is public discussion as well as proximate emulation that may spread the new norms across a region and ultimately between regions. For example, the emergence of norms of low fertility rates, or nondiscrimination between boys and girls, or wanting to send children to schools, and so on, are not only vitally important features of development, they may be greatly influenced by a culture of free discussion and open public debate, without political barriers or social suppression (Basu 1992; Sen, Germain, and Chen 1994; Dreze and Sen 1995, 2002).

Integration

In seeing the role of culture in development, it is particularly important to place culture in an adequately capacious framework. The reasons for this are not hard to seek First, influential as culture is, it is not uniquely pivotal in determining our lives and identities' Other things such as class race, gender, profession, and politics also matter, and can matter powerfully. Our cultural identity is only one of many aspects of our self- realization and is only one influence among a great many that can inspire and influence what we do and how we do it. Further, our behavior depends not only on our values and predispositions, but also on the hard facts of fee presence or absence of relevant institutions and on the incentives-prudential or moral-they generate (North 1981, 1990; Ostrom 1990, 1998; Douglas 1992;Blau 1993 Goody 1996; Bowles 1998; Platteau 2000; Arizps, this volume; Sen 1984).

Second, culture is not a homogeneous attribute- there can be great variations even within the same general cultural milieu. Cultural determinists often underestimate the extent of heterogeneity within what is taken to be "one" distinct culture. Discordant voices are often "internal", rather than coming from outside. Since culture has many aspects, hetero-geneity can also arise from the particular components of culture on which we decide to concentrate (for example, whether we look particularly at religion, ore at literature, or at music, or generally at the style of living).

Third, Culture absolutely does not sit still. Any presumption of stationarity- explicit or implicit—can be disastrously deceptive. To talk of, say, the Hindu culture, or for that matter the Indian culture, taken to be well defined in a temporally stationary way, not only overlooks the great variations within each of these categories, but also ignores their evolution and their large variations over time. The temptation toward

using cultural determinism often takes the hopeless form of trying to fix the cultural anchor on a rapidly moving boat.

Finally, cultures interact with each other and cannot be seen as insulated structures. The isolationalist view—often implicitly presumed—can be deeply delusive (Goody 1996; Throsby 2001). Sometimes we may be only vaguely aware how an influence came 'from outside, but it need not be unimportant for that reason. For example, while chili was unknown in India before the Portuguese brought it there in the i6th century, it is now a thoroughly Indian spice. Cultural features—from the most trivial to the most profound—can change radically, sometimes leaving little 'trace of the past behind.

Taking culture to be independent, unchanging and unchangeable can indeed be very problematic. But that, on the other hand, is no reason for not taking full note of the importance of culture seen in an adequately broad perspective. It is certainly possible to pay adequate attention to culture, along with taking into account all the qualifications just discussed. Indeed, if culture is recognized to be nonhomogeneous, nonstatic, and interactive, and if the importance of culture is integrated with rival sources of influence, then culture can be a very positive and constructive part in our understanding of human behavior and of social and economic development.

Bigotry and Alienation

However, the "how not" issue does deserve extremely serious attention, since rapid-fire cultural generalizations can not only undermine a deeper understanding of the role of culture, but also serve as a tool of sectarian prejudices, social discrimination, and even political tyranny. Simple cultural generalizations have great power in fixing our way of thinking, and often enough they are not just harmless fun. The fact that such generalizations abound in popular beliefs and in informal communication is easily recognized. Not only are these under examined implicit beliefs the subject matter of many racist jokes and ethnic slurs, they sometimes surface as pernicious grand theories. When there is an accidental correlation between cultural prejudice and social observation (no matter how casual), a theory is born, and it may refuse to die even after the chance correlation vanishes altogether.

For example, concocted jokes against the Irish (such crudities as "how many Irishmen do you need to change a light bulb"), which have had some currency in England for a long time, appeared to fit well with the depressing predicament of the Irish economy, when the Irish economy was doing quite badly. But when the Irish economy started growing astonishingly rapidly-indeed faster than any other European economy (as it did, for many years) - the cultural stereotyping and its allegedly profound economic and social relevance were not junked as sheer and unmitigated rubbish. Theories have lives of their own, quite defiantly of the phenomenal world that can be actually observed.

As it happens, cultural prejudice did play a role in the treatment that Ireland received from the British government, and had a pan even in the non prevention of the famines of the 18405, which killed a higher proportion of the population than in any other recorded famine. Joel Mokyr (1983) has discussed the contribution of cultural alienation in London's treatment of Irish problems. As Lebow has argued, while poverty in Britain was typically attributed to economic change and fluctuations, Irish poverty was widely viewed in England as being caused by laziness, indifference, and ineptitude, so that "Britain's mission" was not seen as one to alleviate Irish distress but to civilize her people and to lead them to feel and act like human beings."

The cultural roots of the Irish famines extend, in this sense, at least as far back as Spenser's Faerie Queene, published in 1590, and perhaps even earlier. The art of blaming the victims, plentifully present in the Faerie Queene itself, survived through the famines of the 18405, and the Irish taste for potato was added to the list of the calamities which the natives had, in English view, brought on themselves. Charles Edward Trevelyan, the Head of the Treasury during the famines, expressed his belief that Britain had done what it could for Ireland, even as the famine—with little public relief—lolled rampantly, and even as ship after ship, laden with wheat, oats, cattle, pigs, eggs, and butter, sailed down the Shannon, bound for England (which had greater purchasing power than starving Ireland and could buy what the Irish—bit by the potato blight—could not afford).Trevelyan also pointed to some remarkable cultural explanations of the hunger, including: "There is scarcely a woman of the peasant class in the West of Ireland whose culinary art exceeds the boiling of a potato."

The connection between cultural bigotry and political tyranny can be very close. The asymmetry of power between the ruler and ruled can be combined with cultural prejudices in explaining failures of governance, as is spectacularly observed through the Irish famines of the 1840s (O Grada 1989; Eagleton 1995; Mokyr 1983; Woodham-Smith 1962). Similar use of cultural prejudice for political irresponsibility (or worse) can also be seen in the history of European empires in Asia and Africa. Winston Churchill's famous remark that the Bengal famine of 1943 was caused by the tendency of people there to "breed like rabbits" belongs to this general tradition of blaming the colonial victim, and it had a profound effect in crucially delaying famine relief in that disastrous famine. Cultural critique of the victims can be used by the rulers to justify hugely inefficient - as well as deeply iniquitous-tyrannies.

Cultural Determinism

While the marriage of cultural prejudice and political asymmetry can be quite lethal, the need to be cautious about jumping to cultural conclusions is more pervasive. It can even influence the way experts see the nature and challenges of economic

development. Theories are often derived from fairly scanty evidence. Half-truths or quarter-truths can grossly mislead—sometimes even more than straightforward falsity, which is easier to expose.

Consider, for example, the following argument from the influential and important book jointly edited by Lawrence Harrison and Samuel Huntingdon called Culture Matters (to which I referred earlier), and in particular from Huntington's introductory essay in that volume called "Cultures Count":

> In the early 1990. I happened to come across economic data on Ghana and South Korea in the early 1960s, and I was astonished to see how similar their economies were then. Thirty years later, South Korea had become an industrial giant with the fourteenth largest economy in the world, multinational corporations, major exports of automobiles, electronic equipment, and other sophisticated manufactures, and per capital income approximately that of Greece. Moreover it was on its way to the consolidation of democratic institutions. No such changes had occurred in Ghana, whose per capita income was now about one-fifteenth that of South Koreas. How could this extraordinary difference in development be explained? Undoubtedly, many factors played a role, but it seemed to me that culture had to be a large part of the explanation. South Koreans valued thrift, investment, hard work, education, organization, and discipline. Ghanians had different values. In short, cultures count. (Harrison and Huntington 2000, xiii)

There may well be something of interest in this engaging comparison (perhaps even a quarter-truth torn out of context), and the contrast does call for probing examination. And yet, as used in the explanation just cited, the causal story is extremely deceptive. There were many important differences other than their cultural predispositions—between Ghana and Korea in the 19605 when they appeared to Huntington to be much the same, except for culture. First, the class structures in the two countries were quite different, with a very much bigger- and proactive - role of business classes in South Korea. Second, the politics were very different too, with the government in South Korea willing and eager to play a prime-moving role in initiating a business-centered economic development in a way that did not apply to Ghana. Third, the close relationship between the Korean economy and the Japanese economy, on the one hand, and the United States, on the other, made a big difference, at least in the early stages of Korean development Fourth—and perhaps most important—by the 19605 South Korea had acquired a much higher literacy rate and much more expanded school system than Ghana had. The Korean changes had been brought about in the post-World War II period, largely through resolute public policy, and it could not be seen just as a reflection of age-old Korean culture (McGinn et al. 1980).

On the basis of the slender scrutiny offered, it is hard to justify cither the cultural triumphalism in favor of Korean culture, or the radical pessimism about Ghana's future that the reliance on cultural determinism would tend to suggest. -Neither can

be derived from the over rapid and under analyzed comparison that accompanies the heroic diagnostics. As it happens, South Korea did not rely just on its traditional culture. From the 1940s onward, it deliberately followed lessons from abroad to use public policy to advance its backward school education.

And it has continued to learn from global experience even today. Sometimes the lessons have come from experience of failure rather than success. The East Asian crisis that overwhelmed South Korea among other countries in the region brought out some of the penalties of not having a fully functioning democratic political system, when things moved up and up together, the voice that democracy gives to the underdog may not have been immediately missed, but when the economic crisis came, and divided they fell (as they typically do in such a crisis), the newly impoverished missed the voice that democracy would have given them to use for protest and to demand economic redress. Along with the recognition of the need to pay attention to downside risks and to economic security, the bigger issue of democracy itself became a predominant focus of attention in the politics of economic crisis. This happened in the countries hit by the crisis, such as South Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, and others, but there was also a global lesson here about the special contribution of democracy in helping the victims of disaster, and the need to think not only about "growth with equity" (the old Korean slogan), but also about "downturn with security" (Sen 1999).

Similarly, the cultural damning of the prospects of development in Ghana and other countries in Africa is simply overhasty pessimism with little empirical foundation. For one tiling, it does not take into account how rapidly many countries—South Korea included—have changed, rather than remaining anchored to some fixed cultural parameters. Misidentified quarter-truths can be dreadfully misleading.

There have, of course, been various earlier attempts at cultural determinism in explaining economic development. Indeed, a century ago, Max Weber (1930), the great sociologist, had presented a major thesis on the decisive role of Protestant ethics (in particular of Calvinist ethics) in the successful development of a capitalist industrial economy. Weberian analysis of the role of culture in the emergence of capitalism drew on the world as he had observed it in the late 19 century. It is of particular dialectical interest in the contemporary world in light especially of the recent success of market economies in non-Protestant and even non-Christian societies.

Max Weber was particularly clear that Confucianism was quite unsuited for a dynamic industrial economy. "The Calvinist ethic," Anthony Giddens summarizes Weber, "introduced an activism into the believer's approach to worldly affairs, a drive to mastery in a quest for virtue in the eyes of God, that are altogether lacking in Confucianism," adding: "Confucian values do not promote such rational instrumentalist!!." 16 In sharp contrast with this view, many writers in present-day

Asia make the opposite claim that Confucian ethics is particularly suited for success of industrial and economic progress, as illustrated by the performance of East Asia. There have, in fact, been several different theories seeking explanation of the high performance of East Asian economies in terms of local culture. Michio Morishima (a great economist) has traced the roots of "the Japanese ethos" to the special history of its feudal system; Ronald Dore (a great sociologist) has emphasized the contribution of "Confucian ethics"; Eiko Ikegami (a brilliant young Japanese historian) has focused on the influence of the "Samurai code of honour."

There is much to learn from these theories, and the empirical connections they have brought out have been insightful. And yet it is also remarkable how the specific aspects of cultural explanations, based on observing the past, have often foundered in the tight of later experience. Indeed, theories of cultural determinism have often been one step behind the actual world. By the time Max Weber's privileging of "Protestant ethics" (based on 19th-century experience) was getting widely recognized, many of the Catholic countries, including France and Italy, were beginning to grow faster than' Protestant Britain or Germany. The thesis had to be, then, altered, and the privileged culture was taken more generally to be Christian and western, rather than specifically Protestant.

However, by the time that Eurocentric view of the culture of development got established, Japan was growing much faster than the West. So Japan had to be included in the privileged category, and there was useful work on the role of Japanese ethos, Samurai culture, etc. But, by the time of specialness of Japan was well understood, the East Asian economies were growing very fast, and there was a need to broaden the theory of Japans specialness to include the wider coverage of "Confucian" ethics and a wider and a more spacious regional tradition, fuzzily described as "Asian values." However, by the time that "Confucian" theory had become well established, the fastest growing economy in the world was Thailand, which is a Buddhist country. Indeed, Japan, Korea, China, and Taiwan too have much Buddhist influence in their culture. The grand cultural theories have a propensity to trail one step behind the world of practice, rattier than serving as a grand predictive device.

This record need not, however, be seen as one of embarrassment, since we have learned many things from a closer understanding of the cultural linkages emerging from these specialized studies. But attempts to view culture as a singular, stationary and independent source of development have not—and could not have—worked.

Just to illustrate, consider Korea again, which is often seen as a quintessential exemplification of the power of "Asian values" and of the reach of Confucian ethics in industrial development Confucianism has indeed been a major cultural influence in this country, but there have been many different interpretations of Confucianism. For example, in the 15 century onward, the "Neo-Confucian literati" (Sarim)

challenged the earlier readings of Confucianism, and interpretational disputes were powerfully pursued by the different sides. Neo-Confucians themselves divide into different schools, according to different lines of division, including the classic Chinese distinction between li and ch'i (called, I understand, I and ki in Korea). In the 17th and early 18th century, the contest between the "Old Doctrine" (Noron), led by Song Si-yol, and the " Young Doctrine" (Soron), led by Yun Chung, related in part to different views of good behavior and of good social arrangements. Confucianism does not speak in one voice, and the particular emphasis on li (or i, in Korean) in the authoritarian interpretations of Confucius is by no means tile only claim that obtains loyalty.

There are also influences other than Confucianism. Buddhism, as was mentioned before, has been a major force in Korea, as it has been in China and Japan. From the seventh century when Buddhism became the state religion, it has had political ups and downs, but a constant cultural presence in this country. Christianity too has had a major presence in Korea, and from the i8th century, regular intellectual confrontations can be seen between the creed of so-called western learning, which disputed Confucian orthodoxy, along with other challengers, such as the individualist doctrines of the Wang Yang ming school of Neo-Confucianism, and of course various theorists of Buddhism. The richness and diversity in Korea's cultural past cannot be reduced into a simple story of cultural determinism, woven around an allegedly homogeneous Confucian ethics, or the overarching role of an ill-defined "Asian values" (Han 1971; Henthom 1971; Lee 1984).

Interdependence and Learning

While culture does not work in isolation from other social influences, once we place culture in adequate company, it can greatly help to illuminate our understanding of the world, including the process of development and the nature of our identity. Let me refer again to South Korea, which was a much more literate and more educated society than Ghana in the 1960s (when the two economies appeared rather similar to Huntington). The contrast, as was already mentioned, was very substantially the result of public policies pursued in South Korea in the post World War II period.

To be sure, the postwar public policies on education were also influenced by antecedent cultural features. It would be surprising had there been no such connection. In a two-way relation, just as education, influences culture, so does antecedent culture have an effect on educational policies. It is, for example, remarkable that nearly every country in the world with a powerful presence of Buddhist tradition has tended to embrace widespread schooling and literacy with some eagerness. This applies not only to Japan and Korea, but also to China, and Thailand, and Sri Lanka. Indeed, even miserable Burma, with a dreadful record of political oppression and social neglect, still has a higher rate of literacy than its neighbors in the subcontinent. Seen in a broader framework, there is probably

something here to investigate and learn from.

It is, however, important to see the interactive nature of the process in which contact with other countries and the knowledge of their experiences can make a big difference in practice. There is every evidence that when Korea decided to move briskly forward with school education at the end of the second world war, it was influenced not just by its cultural interest in education, but also by a new understanding of the role and significance of education, based on the experiences of Japan and the West, including the United States (Lee 1984; Mc Ginn et al. 1980).

There is a similar story, earlier on, of interaction and response in Japan's own history of educational development. When Japan emerged from its self-imposed isolation from the world from the beginning of the 17th century, under the Tokugawa regime, it already had a relatively well-developed school system, and in this Japan's traditional interest in education would have played a significant part. Indeed, at the time of Meiji restoration in 1868, Japan had a higher rate of literacy than Europe, despite being economically quite underdeveloped. And yet the rate of literacy in Japan was still low (as indeed it was in Europe too), and no less importantly the Japanese education system was quite out of touch with knowledge and learning in the industrializing West. When, in 1852, Commodore Mathew Perry chugged into the Edo Bay, puffing black smoke from the newly designed steamship, the Japanese were not only impressed-and somewhat terrified- and were driven to accept diplomatic and trade relations with the United States, they also had to reexamine and reassess their intellectual isolation from the world. This contributed to the political process that led to the Meiji restoration, and along with that came a determination to change the face of Japanese education. In the so-called Charter Oath, proclaimed also in 1868, there is a firm declaration on the need to "seek knowledge widely throughout the world" (Cummings 1980,17).

The Fundamental Code of Education issued three years later, in 1872, put the new educational determination in unequivocal terms: "There shall, in the future, be no community with an illiterate family, nor a family with an illiterate person. Kido Takayoshi, one of the most influential leaders of that period, put the basic issue with great clarity".

Our people are no different from the Americans or Europeans of today; it is all a matter of education or lack of education.

That was the challenge that Japan took on with determination, and things moved rapidly forward.

Between 1906 and 1911, education consumed as much as 43% of the budgets of the towns and villages, for Japan as a whole (Gluck 1985). By 1906, the recruiting army officers found that, in contrast with late 19th century, there was hardly any new

recruit who was not literate. By 1910, it is generally acknowledged that Japan had universal attendance in primary schools. By 1913, even though Japan was still economically very poor and underdeveloped, it had become one of the largest producers of books in the world—publishing more books than Britain and indeed more than twice as many as the United States. Indeed, Japan's entire experience of economic development was, to a great extent driven by human capability formation, which included the role of education and training, and this was promoted both by public policy and by a supportive cultural climate (interacting with each other). The dynamics of associative relations are extraordinarily important in understanding how Japan laid the foundations of its spectacular economic and social development.

To carry the story further, Japan was not only a learner but also a great teacher Development efforts of countries in East and Southeast Asia were profoundly influenced by Japans experience in expanding education and its manifest success in transforming society and the economy22 There is a fund of cultural and economic wisdom there from which the world can draw lessons in development. India today may be immensely more advanced technologically and even economically than Japan in the Meiji period, and yet India is paying a very heavy price for ignoring the cultural lessons on the critical role of basic education that emerged so profoundly in the economically poor and politically primitive Meiji Japan (Dreze and Sen 1995,2002).

A cultural interrelations within a broad framework does indeed provide a useful focus for our understanding. It contrasts both with neglecting culture altogether (as some economic models do), and also with the privileging of culture in stationary and isolated terms (as is done in some social models of cultural determinism). We have to go well beyond both and integrate the role of culture with other aspects of our life.

Cultural Globalization

I turn now to what may appear to be a contrary consideration. It might be asked, in praising inter country interactions and the positive influence of learning from elsewhere, am I not overlooking the threat that global interrelations pose to integrity and survival of local culture? In a world that is so dominated by the "imperialism" of the culture of the western metropolis, surely the basic need is, it can be argued, to strengthen resistance, rather than to welcome global influence.

Let me first say that there is no contradiction here. Learning from elsewhere involves freedom and judgment, not being overwhelmed and dominated by outside influence without choice, without scope for one's volitional agency. The threat of being overwhelmed by the superior market power of an affluent West, which has asymmetric influence over nearly all the media, raises a different type of issue altogether. In particular, it does not contradict in any way the importance of learning

from elsewhere.

But how should we think about global cultural invasion itself as a threat to local cultures? There are two issues of particular concern here. The first relates to the nature of maker culture in general, since that is part and parcel of economic globalization. Those who find the values and priori-ties of a market-related culture vulgar and impoverishing (many who take this view belong to the West itself) tend to find economic globalization to be objectionable at a very basic level. The second issue concerns the asymmetry of power between the West and the other countries, and the possibility that this asymmetry may translate into destruction of local cultures – a loss that may culturally impoverish nonwestern societies. Given the constant cultural bombardment that tends to come from the western metropolis (through MTV to Kentucky fried Chicken), there are genuine rears that native traditions may get drowned in that loud din.

Threats to older native cultures in the globalizing world of today are, to a considerable extent, inescapable. It is not easy to solve the problem by stopping globalization of trade and commerce, since the forces of economic exchange and division of labour are hard to resist in an interacting world. Globalization does, of course, raise other problems as well, and its distributional consequences have received much criticism recently. On the other hand, it is hard to deny that global trade and commerce can bring with it- as Adam Smith foresaw – greater economic prosperity for each nation. The challenging task is to get the benefits of globalization on a more shared basis. While that primarily economic question need not detain us here (which I have tried to discuss elsewhere, particularly in Sen 1999), there is relate4d question in the field of culture, to wit, how to increase the real option-the substantive freedoms- that people have, by providing support for cultural traditions that they may want to preserve. This cannot but be an important concern in any development effort that brings about radical changes in the ways of living of people.

Indeed, a natural response to the problem of asymmetry must take the form of strengthening the opportunities that local culture can have, to be able to hold its own against an overpowered invasion. If foreign imports dominate because of greater control over the media, surely one counter-acting policy must involve expanding the facilities that local culture gets, to present its own ware, both locally and beyond it. This is a positive response, rather than the temptation –a very negative temptation-to ban foreign influence.

Ultimately, for both the concerns, the deciding issue must be one of democracy. An overarching value must be the need for participatory decision making on the kind of society people want to live in, based on open discussion, with adequate opportunity for the expression of minority positions. We cannot both want democracy, on the one hand, and yet, on the other, rule out certain choices, on traditionalist grounds, because of their "foreignness" (irrespective of what people decide to choose, in an

informed and reflected way). Democracy is not consistent with options of citizens being banished by political authorities, or by religious establishments, or by grand guardians of taste, no matter how unbecoming they find the new predilection to be. Local culture may indeed need positive assistance to compete in even terms, and support for minority tastes against foreign onslaught may also be a part of the enabling role of a democratic society, but the prohibition of cultural, influences from abroad is not consistent with a commitment of democracy and liberty.

Related to this question there is also a more subtle issue that takes us beyond the immediate worry about bombardment of mass western Culture. This concerns the way we see ourselves in the world- a world that is asymmetrically dominated by western preeminence and power. Through a dialectic process, this can, in fact, lead to a powerful inclination to be aggressively "local" in culture, as a kind of "brave" resistance to western dominance. In an important article, called "What Is a Muslim?," Akeel Bilgrami (1995) has argued that the confrontational relations often lead people to see themselves as "the other"—defining their identity as being emphatically different from that of western people. Something of this "otherness" can be seen in the emergence of various self-definitions that characterize cultural or political nationalism and religious assertiveness or even fundamentalism. While belligerently anti western, these developments are, in fact, deeply foreign-dependent—in a negative and contrary form. Indeed, seeing oneself as "the other" does less than justice to one's free and deliberative agency. This problem too has to be dealt with in a way that is consistent with democratic values and practice, if that is taken to be a priority. Indeed, the "solution" to the problem that Bilgrami diagnoses cannot he in "prohibiting" any particular outlook, but in public discussion that clarifies and illuminates the possibility of being alienated from ones own independent agency.

Finally, I should mention that one particular concern I have not yet discussed arises from the belief—often implicit—that each country or collectivity must stick to its "own culture," no matter how attracted people are to "foreign cultures." This fundamentalist position not only involves the need to reject importing McDonald s and beauty contests to the non- western world, but also the enjoyment there of Shakespeare or ballets or even cricket matches. Obviously enough, this highly conservative position must be in some tension with the role and acceptability of democratic decisions, and I need not repeat what I have already said about the conflict between democracy and the arbitrary privileging of any practice. But it also involves an additional philosophical issue about the labeling of cultures on which Rabindranath Tagore, the poet, had warned.

This concerns the issue whether one's culture is to be defined by the geographical origin of a practice, rather than by its manifest use and enjoyment, Tagore (1928) put his argument against regional labeling with great force:

Whatever we understand and enjoy in human products instantly becomes ours, wherever they might have then origin. I am proud of my humanity when I can acknowledge the poets and artists of other countries as my own. Let me feel with unalloyed gladness that all the great glories of man are mine.

The criteria of understanding and assessment are important, but—as Tagore rightly noted — the inert place of origin has no right to alienate us from what we enjoy and have reason to cherish. Culture, after all, is more than mere geography.

Concluding Remarks

To conclude, I have tried to discuss, first of all, how—in many different ways—culture interacts with development. There are complex epistemic, ethical, and political issues involved in identifying the ways in which culture may or may not influence development. Some specific lines of connection have been identified, particularly related to the demands of assessment and policy.

Second, the acknowledgment of the importance of culture cannot be instantly translated into ready-made theories of cultural causation. It is evidently too easy to jump from the frying pan of neglecting culture into the fire of crude cultural determinism. The Utter has caused much harm in the past (and has even encouraged political tyranny and social discrimination) and it continues to be a source of confusion which can seriously mislead assessment and policy m the contemporary world.

Third, what is needed is not the privileging of culture as something that works on its own, but the integration of culture in a wider picture, in which culture, seen in a dynamic and interactive way, is one important influence among many others. Attempts at integration have to pay particular attention to heterogeneity of each broadly defined culture, the interdependence between different cultures, and the vibrant nature of cultural evolutions.

Fourth, there has been much focus, in this essay, on the positive contributions that cultural influences across borders can make. But I have also discussed the cultural provocation that global asymmetry of power generates. There are good arguments for not being overwhelmed by this asymmetry— either in the form of submissive supplication, nor in the dialectical and negative form of redefining oneself as "the other" (in contrast with "the West"), which makes one lose one's independent identity. Both these reactions can be contrasted with reliance on free and informed choice, aided by public discussion, critical scrutiny and a participatory political environment.

There is no particular "compulsion" either to preserve departing life styles or alternatively, to adopt the newest fashion from abroad, but there is a need for

people to be able to take part, in these social decisions. This gives further reason for attaching importance to such elementary capabilities as leading and writing (through basic education), being well informed and well briefed (through a free media), and having realistic chances of participating freely (through elections, referendums and the general use of civil rights)There are institutional demands for cultural democracy.

A democratic commitment is consistent with assisting local cultures to compete in comparable terms, but does not encourage the arbitrary elimination of options on grounds of their foreign origin or a priori unacceptability. The ultimate test is the freedom of the citizens to exercise their free agency and choose in an informed and participatory way If that foundational value has priority, then other concerns have to be integrated with its preeminence.

Notes

I draw, in this essay, on three earlier presentations on related themes, respectively at a World Bank meeting on development in Tokyo on December 13, 2000, at the Pardee Center of Boston University on February 4, 2002, and at the University of Mumbai on February 26, 2002.

Douglas (1987), North (1990), and Blau (1993) provide interesting insights on how institutions think.

Douglas (1973/1982, 1992); Eliot (1948); Appadurai (1986); Inglehart (1990); Adorno (1991); Mosseto (1993); Grief (1994b); Appiah and Gates (1995); Jessor, Colby, and Shweder (1996); Klamer (1996); Landes (1998); Throsby (1999); Eagleton (2000); Platteau (2000); and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] 1998, 2000) contain important illustrations of different aspects of these pervasive connections.

Cultural capabilities are among the major components of substantial freedoms; on the nature and use of the perspective of capabilities, see Alkire (2002a, c); Sen (1982, 1985a, b, 1999); Griffin and Knight (1990); Nussbaum (1993, 2000); Nussbaum and Sen (1993); Nussbaum and Glover (1995); Pattanaik (1998); Appadurai (2004); Arizpe (this volume); and Osmani (2001), among others.

There is a vast literature ion the connections between economic rewards and cultural pursuits (Baumol and Bowen 1966; Peacock and Weir 1975; Blaug 1976; Towse 1993, 1997; Peacock and Rizzo 1994; Throsby 1994, 2001; Klamer 1996; Hutter and Rizzo 1997; Bowles 1998; Cowen 1998; Avrami, Mason, and da la Torre 2000; Caves 2000; Frey 2000).

See Boniface (1995); Herbert (1995); Hutter and Rizzo (1997); Avrami, Mason, and de la Torre (2000); and Throsby (2001) on the interconnection between the cultural and economic aspects of tourism, among other contributions.

The concept of social capital and its uses receive attention of UNESCO (19988, 2000); Dasgupta and Serageldin (2000); Blau (2001b); and Throsby (2001).

Often many different arguments can point in the same direction, in terms of needed action. For example, there has been only partial excavation of the ruins of the ancient Buddhist university of Nalanda in India, which had come to its end in the 12th century about the time when Oxford University was being founded (after having flourished for many hundreds of years, and having attracted scholars from abroad as well as within India- Hsuan Tsang from China in t he seventh century was one of the most prominent alumni of Nalanda). Further investment in Nalanda excavation, accessibility, and facilities will not only encourage tourism, and generate

income in one of the poorest parts of India, but can also help to generate a fuller understanding of the diversity of India's historical traditions.

There are, as a consequence, considerable difficultie4s in finding suitable indicators of "cultural development" (Pattanaik 1998; Alkire 2002c).

Since I don't like chili, I have much practical experience of how hard it is to escape this foreign import in many parts of India. I also frequently encounter the comment that my culinary taste must have become corrupted by my spending a lot of time in the West. To this I have to reply, "No, it is pre-colonial- what we Indians ate prior to western imperialism messed up our eating habits." There seems to be little memory left in India of its pre- Portuguese, prechili taste.

In Why Ireland Starved, Joel Mokyr (1983, 291) argues that "Ireland was considered by Britain as an alien and even hostile nation."

See Mokyr (1983, 291-92) for a balanced assessment of this line of diagnosis.

See Woodham-Smith (1962, 76).

Churchill also explained that his job in governing India was made difficult by the fact that Indians were "the beastliest people in the world, next to the Ger-mans" (Roberts 1994, 213).

See, however, Goody's (1996) powerful critique of this reading of history.

Antohony Giddens, introduction to Weber (1930, xvi). See also Weber (1951).

See Morishima (1982); Dore (1987); and Ikegami (1995), among other investigations of the cultural aspects of Japanese economic success.

Given the importance that is attached in Buddhism to the ability of people to read religious and philosophical discourses, there is even a prima facie motivational connection here that can be cogently examined and critically scrutinized. Indeed, one of Buddha's criticisms of Hinduism in his time was that the scriptures were in Sanskrit, which made them inaccessible to the common people of India.

See, for example; Cummings (1980), chapter 2.

See Passin (1965, 209-11); also Cummings (1980, 17).

Quoted in Kumon and Rosovsky (1992, 330).

The role of education in the economic development of East and Southeast Asia is

extensively discussed in World Bank (1993).

See Hirschman (1977, 1982); Brittan and Hamlin (1995); Griffin (1996); Klamer (1996); Appadurai (1996); Bowles (1998)! Cowen (1998, 2002); Landes (1998); UNESCO (1998-2000); Arizpe (2000); Blau (2001); and Throsby (2001) for various assessments of market-oriented cultures, arguing in different directions.

On a related issue, in the context of Indian identity, see Sen (1997).

The Arts: Architecture. Sculpture, Painting, Music and the Dance'
The Spirit of Indian Art

-By A. L Basham

Nearly all the artistic remains of ancient India are of a religious nature, or where at least made for religious purposes. Secular art certainly existed, for literature shows that kings dwelt in sumptuous palaces, decorated with lovely wail paintings and sculpture, though all these have vanished. Much has been said and written about Indian art since, some forty years ago, European taste began to doubt the established canons of the 19th century and looked to Asia and Africa for fresh aesthetic experience. Since then most authorities on the subject, Indian and European alike have stressed the religious and mystical aspect of Indian art. While admitting the realism and earthiness of the earliest sculpture, most critics have read the truths of Vedanta or Buddhism into the artistic remains of our period, and have interpreted them as expressions of deep religious experience, sermons in stone on the oneness of ail thins In the Universal Spirit.

One student at least disagrees with this interpretation. There are indeed a few remains which seem imbued with an intensity of religious felling rare in the art of the world, but it is the full and active life of the times which is chiefly reflected in the art of ancient India, at first directly, as at Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati, then with a gentle idealism, as at Ajanta, and finally in the multitude f figures, divine and human, carved on the many temples of the Middle Ages. In all these phases there is a horror vacui and an intense vitality, which remained us rather of this world than the next, and suggest to us the warm bastle of the Indian City and the turbulent pollution of the Indian forest.

Gothic architecture and sculpture are vertical. Spire and arch point upward, and as the style develops the spire becomes taller and the arch more pointed. The Christs, saints and angles of the Middle Ages in Europe are often disproportionately tall, and their tallness is accentuated by long garments reaching to the ankles. Their poses are generally restful, and they rarely smile. Medieval European art was truly religious; its conventions seem to have been deliberately designed to lead the worshipper's thoughts away from the world of flesh to the things of the spirit. Much of it was the work of pious monks, or of men with deep religious vocations.

The tendency of Indian art is diametrically opposite to that of medieval Europe. The temple towers, though tall, are solidly based on earth. The ideal type is not abnormally tall, but rather short and stocky. Gods and demigods alike are young and

handsome; their bodies are founded and well-nourished, often by European standards rather effeminate, occasionally they are depicted as grim or wrathful, but generally they smile and sorrow is rarely portrayed. With the exception of the type of the dancing Siva the sacred icon is always firmly grounded, either seated or with both feet flat on the ground. We need hardly mention that all-Indian temple scutoture. Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina alike, made full use of the female form as a decorative motif, always scantily dressed, and nearly always in accordance with Indian standards of beauty.

Asceticism and self-denial in various forms are praised in much Indian religious literature. But the ascetics who appear in sculpture are usually wed fed and cheerful. As an example we may cite the colossal rock-cut medieval image of the Jaina saint Gommatesvara at Sravana Belgoia in Mysore. He stands bolt upright in the posture of meditation know as Kayotsarga, with feet firm on the earth, and arms held downwards but not touching the body, and he smiles faintly. The artist must have tried to express the soul almost setfree from the trammels of matter and about to leave for its final resting-place of everlasting bliss at the top of the universe. Whatever the intentions of the artist, however, Gommatesvara is still an ordinary young man of his time, full of calm vitality. The saint is said to have stood for so long in mediation that creepers twined round his motionless lags, and these are shown In the sculpture; but though intended to portray his sanctity, they do out emphasize that he is a creature of the earth whom the earth pulls back.

Ancient India's religious art differs strikingly from her religious literature. The latter is the work of men with vocations, Brahmans, monks and ascetics. The former came chiefly from the hands of secular craftsmen, who, though they worked according to priestly instructions and increasingly rigid iconographical rules, loved me world they knew with an intensity which is usually to be seen behind the religious forms in which they expressed themselves. In our opinion the usual inspiration of Indian art Is not so much a ceaseless quest for the Absolute as a delight in the world as the artist found it, a sensual vitality, and a feeling of growth and movement as regular and organic as the growth of living things upon earth.

Of the visual arts of ancient and medieval India much architecture and sculpture and a little painting have survived. As most of the existing sculpture was intended to be ancillary to architecture we deal with the latter first.

The utilitarian brick buildings of the Harappa Culture, strong and competent though they were, had apparently little aesthetic merit, and will not be mentioned here With the exception of the walls of Rajagrha (p.198), which also have no artistic value, we have no significant architectural remains between the Harappa period and that of the Mauryas. The was due to the fact that few If any buildings were made of stone during this time.

Megasthenes mentions that the palace of Chandragupta Maurya, though very large and luxurious, was built of carved and gilded wood, and the earliest stone buildings to have survived were evidently modeled on wooden originals. We must not assume, from the complete lack of material remains, that Indian building in the Mauryan period, or even before, was mean or primitive. The Mauryan monolithic columns prove that the craftsman of those days had a through mastery of working in stone, and if the great cities of Mauryan times were built of wood we must attribute this chiefly to the comparative scarceness of stone in the Gangetic Plain and the abundance of timber where it is now scarce. There is no evidence of a cultural advance in the Middle Ages, when building in stone became common, but foreign contacts, but also to the gradual disappearance of timber forests from the more populous and civilized regions of India.

The wonderful Mauryan columns with their finely carved capitals fal rather under the head of sculpture than of architecture, for most of those, which survive, had no architecture purpose. Fragments of similar coulumns, found at Patna, supported thereof of a place, which had been reasonably identified as that of Ashoka, the remains of the Patna pillared has are so fragmentary that the plan of the building cannot be accurately reconstructed, but it was evidently a large one. At this time, however, stone buildings must still have been very rare. At the Mauryan pillars and other products of Mauryan stonemasons come from the same quarry, at Chunar, not far from Bananas, and all bear the stamp of the same school. They are the work of craftsmen who had learnt much from Persia, and perhaps a little from Greece, but had given their output distinctive Indian characteristics. Their workshops were probably maintained by the Mauryan kings, and vanished with the dynasty. Working in stone had then to make new beginning in India.

THE STUPA

The Stupa began as an earthen burial mound, which was revered by the local population, and we have seen that the cult stupas was taken up by Buddhism, and that Asoka raised stupas In the Buddha's honour all over India. Only one stupa in Nepal, survives in the form in which the great emperor left it, but excavations of existing stupas have shown the character of the earlier ones. They were large hemispherical domes, containing a central chamber, in which the relics of the Buddha were placed in a small casket, often beautifully carved in crystal. The core of the stupa was of urburnt brick, and the outer face of burnt brick, covered with a thick layer of paster, the stupa was crowned by an umbrella of wood or stone, and was surrounded by a wooden fence enclosing a path for the ceremonial clockwise circumambulation (pradaksina), which was the chief form of reverence paid to the relics within It.88

88 It has been suggested that the stupa, like the later Hindu temple, was thought of as microcosm of the universe. There are Mesopotamian precedents for this belief, and the passion for cosmic symbolism, evident in India from Vedic times, certainly led to the making of the analogy at least in respect of the

In the period between the Mauryas and the Guptas much wealth and energy were spent on Buddhist architecture, and the older stupas were greatly enlarged and beautified. Of these three are specially noteworthy-those at Bharhut in Madhya Bharat, Sanchi in the old Bhopal state, and Amaravati in the tower Kistna Valley.

The Bharhut stupa perhaps in its present form dating from the middle of the 2nd century B.C., is important chiefly for its sculpture, and the stupa itself has now vanished. That at Sanchi, on the other hand, is one of the most striking architectural remains of ancient India.

In the 2nd century B.C. the old Sanchi stupa was enlarged to twice its original size, becoming a hemisphere of about 120 feet in diameter. It was then faced with well-cut masonry laid in regular courses, and besides the lower path on ground level, an upper terraced path some 16 feet from the ground was added. The old wooden railings were replaced by stone ones 9 feet high, tenoned and mortised in imitation of carpentry. Finally, towards the end of the 1st century B.C., four glorious gateways (torana) were added at the four cardinal points. Lesser stupas and monastic buildings surrounded the great stupa.

The Sanchi gateways are perhaps more noteworthy for their cared omamentation than their architecture. Each consists of two square columns, above which are three curved architraves supported by animals or dwarfs, the whole reaching some 34 feet above ground-level. The construction of these gateways, from technical point o view, is primitive, and it has been suggested their design is based on the log or bamboo portcullis of the ancient Indian village. The finish, on the other hand, is remarkably good, and the carvings are among the most fresh and vigorous products of the Indian sculptor.

In respect of size few Indian stupas greatly exceeded the Sanchi, but in Ceylon the stupa reached tremendous proportions. The Abhayagiri Dagaba at Anuradhapura, the capital of the early kings of Ceylon, was 327 feet in diameter, and larger than some of the pyramids of Egypt. It reached its present size, after a succession of enlargements, in the 2nd century A.D.

In India stupa architecture became more and more ornate. The Stupa of Amaravati, which in its final form was completed c.200 A.D., was larger than that of Sanchi, and its two promenades were adorned with carved panels (some of which can be seen British Museum) telling the story of the life of the Buddha. Meanwhile in Northern India stupas grew taller in proportion to their bases. They were often set on square platforms, which in Burma and Indonesia were developed into stepped pyramids,

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temple But, though many authorities would disagree with us, we do not believe that cosmic symbolism played any great part in the thought of the ancient Indian architect.

the largest of which is the enormous stupa of Borobodur, in Java, built in the 8th century A.D. Pinnacles became higher, and developed towards the spring froms of the present-day temples of Burma and Siam.

Of later Indian stupas the two most famous are those of Sarnath and Nalanda. The tail stupa of Sarnath, near Banaras, the scene of the Buddha's first sermon, of which now little more than the inner core remains, was once a most imposing structure of beautifully patterned brickwork with a high cylindrical upper dome rising from a lower hemispherical one, and large images of the Buddha set in gable ends at the cardinal points. In its final form it dates from the Gupta period.

The stupa at Nalanda seven times successively enlarged In this present ruined state gives the impression of a brick pyramid with steps leading up to its terraces. It was originally a tall stupa raised on a high base, with a smaller stupa at each corner but the monument underwent so many alterations In Gupta and Pala times that It is now difficult for the untrained eye to recognize its original form at any one stage of Its development.

Around the great stupas were lesser ones, often containing the ashes of monks famous for their piety and learning, and a whole complex of buildings -monasteries, shrine-rooms, preaching halls and resthouses for pilgrims. At the greater Buddhist sites such as Nalanda the groups of monastic buildings were often surrounded by fortress-like walls, in their present partial dilapidation these heavy domes sometimes seem a little forbidding. Originally the lime washed or plastered stupa shone brilliantly white in the tropical sunlight, its pinnacle, now generally broken, rising like a golden spear from the ceremonial stone umbrella on top of the dome. Then it must have given a different impression. The great Ruvanvali Dagaba at Anuradhapura in Ceylon, which in recent years has been restored and is once more used In Buddhist worship, rising white in the distance out of the plain, shows the stupa at its best, as a worthy emblem of a great religion.

CAVE TEMPLES

Of the centuries before the Gupta period the chief architectural remains, other than stupas and their surrounding gateways and railings, are artificial caves, excavated for religious purposes. Early specimens -show a slavish imitation of carpentry, which proves conclusively that the art of building in stone was still in its infancy. Thus two of the caves of Barabar Hill, near Gaya, dedicated by Asoka to Ajlcika monks, are in the form of a plain rectangular outer hall, at one end of which is an inner chamber with a curved wall and over- hanging eaves. The caves were evidently substituted for a standardized religious meeting place consisting of a round thatched hut standing in a courtyard, and their designer could not transcend the pattern to which he had been used. Similar dependence on wooden models is evident in many other features of design until the Gupta period.

The caves of the Barabar and Nagarjuni Hills are quite unadorned, with the exception of one at Nagarjuni, near Barabar, which has a comparatively simple carved entrance, added during or soon after the Mauryan period. The inner walls of all the caves are finely polished, no doubt by workmen of the school which was responsible for the polish of the Asokan columns.

Later cave temples and monasteries are to be found in many parts of India, but it was in the Western Deccan, under the Satavahana Empire and its successors, that the largest and most famous artificial caves were excavated. The oldest Deccan cave, at Bhaja, near Poona, consists of a deep apsidal hall, cut in solid rock, with a row of plain octagonal pillars near the walls, which support curved ribs carved to represent the barrel vaulting of a wooden building. At the further end of the hall is a small stupa, also cut from solid rock, and the outside of the cave has a facade, carved like a gable, with smaller ornamental gables on either side. Beside this cave, which was a meeting hall for Buddhist monks and lay worshippers, is a second cave consisting or a broad cutting into the rock, leading to five ceils, which were the dwellings of the monks.

From these beginnings the cave temples developed in size and splendor. The finest single example is the great caitya hall at Karli, probable made about the beginning of the Christian era. This is cut 124 feet deep into the rock, and is of the same general pattern as that at Bhaja and many other caves of the Western Deccan, but much developed in size and splendour. The columns are no longer plain and austere, but by a process which can be traced through earlier stages they have become heavy and ornate. Each is set on a square steeped plinth, and rises from a bulbous base, which is carved to represent a large pot with base and rim; this is another survival of wooden construction, for the octagonal wooden pillars of earlier days were bedded in large earthenware pots to protect them from ants and other insects. Each pillar carries a complicated group of horses and elephants with riders to support the roof, which is carved in imitation of the timber rafters of barrel vaulting. The caitya or shrine at the end of the halls is much enlarged in comparison with those of other caves.

The simple facades of the earlier caves were developed into elaborately curved verandas, usually with a large window, the full size of the gable-end, which let light into the hall, the harli cave has three fine entrances, and a frieze of relief sculpture on the tower levels, with small carved gable-ends above.

With the caitya halls the associated rock-cut monasteries or sangharamas also developed in size and spledour as a cave monastery became too small for its inhabitants a new cave was cut nearby and so the complex of caves grew over the centuries. The most famous of these cave groups is that of Ajanta, in the northwest comer of Hyderabad. Here no less than twenty-seven caves, some going 100 feet

deep into the rock, were excavated in the horseshoe curve of a hillside, nor far from the great trade route leading from the North to the Deccan. The earliest caves date from the 2nd century B. C., while others are as late as the 7th century A.D. The splendid sculpture and lovely paintings with which they are adorned make them one of the most glorious monuments of India's past.

Perhaps even more impressive are the later cave temples of Ellora, near Aurangabad, some thirty miles from Ajanta. Here are no less than thirty-four caves, constructed from the 5th to the 8th centuries A. D., most of them Hindu but some Buddhist and Jaina. The crowning achievement of Ellora is the great Kailasanatha Temple, excavated on the instructions of the Rastrakuta emperor Krana (C.A.D. 756-773). With this the concept of the cave temple was transcended, for the king was not satisfied with a mere hollow in the rock. The entire rock face was cut away and a splendid temple carved like a statue from the hillside, complete with shrine- room, hall, gateway, votive pillars, lesser shrines and cloisters, the whole adorned with divine figures and scenes large and small of a grace and strength rarely seen again in Indian art. The ground plan of Kailasanatha Is of about the same size as the Parthenon, and it is half as high again. The labour necessary to construct it, however, was less than that which would be required to build a comparable temple of masonry, for transport created no problem, and the process of construction, beginning at the top of the cliff and working down to the base, avoided the need of scaffolding. But no considerations of this kind can disparage the glory of Kailasanatha, "the most stupendous single work of art executed in India".

Kailasanatha is the earliest temple hewn from solid rock, there are to be found at Mamallapuram, on the sea cost some thirty miles south of Madras, where seventeen temples, none very large in size, were carved from outcropping hillocks of granite under the patronage of 7th century Pallava kings. The most famous of these, the "Seven Pagodas", still show the influence of wood construction, and are of a distinctive style, possibly looking back to Dravidian prototypes.

The latest cave-temples of importance are those of Elephanta, a beautiful little island off Bombay. These, in the same style as those of Ellora, are famous for their sculpture, especially for the great Trimurti figure of Siva. After these no important caves were excavated. Indians had long known the art of building in stone. The Kailasanatha Temple carved in exact imitation of masonry, showed the dissatisfaction with the older cave form. The great period of medieval temple building had begun.

TEMPLES

The earliest free-standing religious building of which traces remain a small round hall, probably originally containing a Buddhist stupa, at Bairat near Jaipur, this dates from the 3rd century B.C., and was made of brick and wood; little but the

foundations now exist, and the form had no future.

The next landmark in temple architecture is the temple generally known, from the modem name of the site, as that of Jandial, excavated from one of the mounds which covered the city of Taksasila. This, one of the important buildings of the Greek city, contained a square inner sanctuary, a meeting hall and a courtyard, and its outer and inner entrances were each flanked by two large pillars of orthodox Ionian pattern. The Jandial temple was probably Zoroastrian, and had no direct successors, but the influence of Western architecture is clearly to be seen in Kashmir, where columns of Hellenic type were used throughout the medieval period, in conjunction with distinctive pyramidal roofs and arches surmounted by pointed gables, which give the Kashmir style an almost Gothic appearance. Most famous Kashmir's early temples is the Temple of the Sun at Martand, dating from the 8th century. There are no remains of free-standing Hindu temples erected before the Gupta period, though by-this time they must long have been built in wood, clay and brick. From the Gupta period, however, several examples survive, chiefly in Western India, all showing the same general pattern. Pillars were usually ornate, with heavy bell-shaped capitals surmounted by animal motifs, and the entrances were often carved with mythological scenes and figures. All the Gupta temples were small, and most had flat roofs. Their masonry was held together without mortar, and was far larger and thicker than was necessary for the comparatively small buildings. Evidently their builders had not yet fully mastered their technique, and were still thinking in terms of the cave: The finest Gupta temple, that of Deogarh near Jhansi, probably of the 6m century, marks a great advance. Here iron dowels were used to hold the masonry together, and a small tower rose above the sanctum. The portal veranda, vas continued all round the building, making a covered walk.

The standard type of the Hindu temple, which has persisted from the 6th century to the present day, was not fundamentally different from that of the ancient Greeks. The heart of the temple was a small dark shrine-room (garbhagrha), containing the chief icon. This opened on a hall for worshippers (mandapa), originally a separate building, but usually joined to the shrine-room by a vestibule (antarala). The hall was approached by a porch (ardhamandapa). The shrine-room was generally surmounted by a tower, while lesser towers rose from other parts of the building. The whole was set in a rectangular courtyard, which might contain lesser shrines, and was often placed on a raised platform.

The medieval period in India was, like the Middle Ages in Europe, an age of faith. With better techniques of stone construction new temples sprang up everywhere to replace earlier wooden buildings, and kings and chiefs vied with one another in .their foundation. Strict canons of design in both architecture and sculpture were laid down in textbooks (silpasastra), some of which survive. The technique of architecture was not far advanced, despite the great achievements of the period. Though arches occur in the cave temples and in Kashmir, the art of making a true

arch, dome or vault, seems to have been ignored, although corbelling-the building up of an arch or dome by overlapping courses of brick or masonry-was widely practised, and produced work of great beauty. Mortar was known, but rarely used, for the style of arch- less and domeless architecture employed made it virtually unnecessary.

The temple was ornately decorated, often even to the dark shrine- rooms lighted only by flickering oil-lamps. Despite this ornateness the apprenticeship of his tradition in rock architecture gave the architect a strong sense of mass. Heavy cornices, strong pillars, wide in proportion to their height, and the broad base of the Sikhara, or tower, give to Indian temple architecture a feeling of strength and solidity, only in part counteracted by the delicately ornate friezes and the many figures in high or low relief which often fill the whole surface of the temple wall.

Considering the size of the land, Indian temple architecture is remarkably uniform, but authorities distinguish two chief styles and numerous schools. The Northern or Indo-Aryan style prefers a with rounded top and curvilinear outline, while the tower of the Southern or Dravidian style is usually in the shape of a rectangular truncated pyramid. The stages of stylistic development are clearer in the South than in the North, where many ancient temples were destroyed by the Muslim invaders. We therefore consider the styles of the Peninsual first.

Temple building gained much from the patronage of the Pallava and Chalukya kings in the 6 -8 centuries. Important early temples of the former dynasty are to be found at Mamallapuram, already referred to, and Kanci, while the Calukyas left temple remains at their capital Badami, and the nearby site of Alhole, both in Hyderabad. Both styles show the gradual emancipation of the architect from the techniques of carpentry and cave architecture. The apogee of the Pallava style was reached in the Shore Temple at Mamallapuram and the Kailasanatha Temple of Kanci, built early in the 8th century. The latter has a pyramidal tower formed of two courses of small barrel vaults, surmounted by a solid cupola suggesting a Buddhist stupa.

The stupa of the Pallavas was developed further under the Cola dynasty (10th -12th centuries), the finest products of which are the great e of Siva, at Tanjore built by Rajaraja the Great (985-1014), and the temple built by his successor, Rajendra I, at his new capital of Gangailkondacolapuram, near Kumbakonam. The former was probably the largest temple built in India up to that time, the comparatively modest tower of the Pallava style was replaced by a great pyramid, rising from a tall upright base and crowned with a domed final, the whole being nearly 200 feet high. This set the style of Dravidian sikhara, which has continued with some variation down to the present day. Both these temples contain elaborate pillared and beautiful decoration.

In the next phase of Dravidian architecture the emphasis shifted the tower above the chief-shrine to the entrance gateway of the surrounding wall. Though there are a

few records of the desecration of temples by hostile sectarians or invaders, it is difficult to find a practical reason for the growing custom of surrounding South Indian temples with strong and high walls, unless this was done in imitation of the palaces of kings, with which the temples had much in common. From the 12th century onwards it became usual to fortify the temple, often with three square concentric walls, with gates on the four sides. The gates were surmounted by watchtowers or gatehouses, and these developed into soaring towers (gopuram), generally much taller than the modest skikhara over the central shrine. The entrance tower was usually in the form of an oblong pyramid, with its broadest side parallel to the wall. The new style is often called oblong pyramid, with its broadest side parallel to the wall. The new style is often called Pandyan, from the name of the dynasty which supplanted the Colas in the Tamil country, and the kings of which were responsible for building walls and gateway towers round many existing shrines. The style introduced more elaborate ornamentation, and the use of animal forms in pilasters and columns, Including the rampant horses and leogryphs which give a distinctive character to late Dravidian architecture.

The culmination of the Pandyan style lies in the mighty temple complexes of Madurai, Srirangam, and elsewhere, which are strictly outside our period; belonging in their present form to the 17th century. The great temple of Madurai is the most famous and beautiful of these, but the largest is the Vaisnavite temple of Srirangam, which is contained in an outer wall measuring 2,475 by 2,880 feet, and has six Inner walls, ail with gopurams, surrounding a shrine of comparatively modest proportions. These later towers were covered with sculptured figures.

While these developments were taking place in the Tamil country, other styles developed in the Deccan, under the Calukyas, Rastrakutas and Hoysalas. The earliest Calukyan temples closely resemble the Guptan in style. By the 8th century they had developed individual features, including the wide overhanging caves which became characteristic of the medieval temples of the Central Deccan. The later Calukyas and Hoysalas (11th -14th centuries) developed a more elaborate style. Their temples were no longer built on a rectangular plan, but were polygonai or stellate, raised on a tall solid platform of the same shape as the building. These temples give a strong feeling of flatness, for platforms and walls alike are covered with rather narrow carved friezes of elephants, horsemen, geese, monsters (yali), and scenes of mythology and legend. The grotesque mask (kirtimukha)89 became very common as a decorative feature, and turned columns, often ornately carved, were widely used. The largest and most famous temples of this style, at Halebid (Dorasamudra, the Hoysala capital) and Belur, have no towers, and it is thought that they were not completed. Some smaller temples of the same period have towers, notably the

89 The Kirtimukha is found in other South Indian schools as a decorative motif, especially in the makara-torana, a gateway with a large kirtimukha made above the lintel connected by foliate design to two makaras or sea monsters at the base of the doorposts. These motifs were exported to South-East Asia and became regular features of Indonesian and Cambodian architecture.

charming temple of Somnathpur, which has three low domelike sikharas, their breadth emphasized by parallel mouldings. Its profusion of pillars, and its abhorrence not only of blank spaces but even of plane surfaces and straight lines, tend to give this style an impression of wedding-cake prettiness, despite the solid proportions of its masonry and the brilliance of its sculptured decoration.

The school which flourished under the Vijayanagara Empire, and reached its apogee in the 16th century, shows both Pandyan and Hoysala features. The florid carving of the Hoysalas was developed with even greater exuberance, and new elements appeared in temple complex. As well as the main shrine every important temple in South India was provided with a shrine for the amman, the god's chief wife, which was often nearly as large as the main shrine itself, and a marriage-hall (kalyanamandapam), wherein the icons of and goddess were ceremonially united on festival days. Another features of the Vijayanagara style is the profusion of strong yet delicate carving which adorns the pillared halls, the many columns of which are so decorated that they become sculptures in their own right. Prancing horses, vigorous and energetic, leap from the stone, with leogryphs and other fantastic monsters. For brilliancy of decorative imagination the Vijaynagara style of architecture was surpassed in Hindu India. Its finest production is undoubtedly the Vitthala Temple at Hampi, the old Vijayanagara.

In the chief cities of nmorthern India alsomst all traces of het architecture of the Hindu period have vanished. Even in holy Banaras all the great and famous temples are comparatively recent. One important exception, however, is the Buddhist temple at Gaya the main tower of which is probably as early as, the 6th century. This is a large pyramid of brickwork, set on a high plinth: it is a domed with parallel courses of "caitya, window" pattern is surmounted by a lofty pinnacle which was originally a small stupa. Similar towers existed in other Buddhist monastic establishments, but have long since vanished. The Gaya tower suggests rather the Southern than the Northern style of sikhara, but other temples of the period either have no towers or have small curvilinear ones which are evidently the prototypes of the later Northern sikhara. Medieval North Indian architecture is best illustrated by three schools those of Orissa, Bundelkhand, and Gujarat and South Rajasthan. There were other local developments, as well as the distinctive style of Kashmir which we have already noted, but these three are certainly the most important, and their products are the best preserved.

The Orissan School flourished from the 10th to the 13th centuries, and its chief monuments lie in and around the towns of Bhubanesar and Puri. The finest Orissan temple is the Lingaraja at Bhubanesar, which shows the North Indian sikhara in its final form-a tower which begins to curve inwards at about one third of its height, with rounded top crowned by a flat stone disc (amalaka) and a final (kalasa). The upward movement of this graceful curving tower is emphasized by deep vertical inlets, but its solidity and firm basis on earth are very evident. The Lingaraja, like

most Orrisan temples, is build as a series of four halls-a hall of offerings, a dancing hall an assembly hall and a sanctuary.90 The sanctuary is crowned by the great tower, but the other three elements of the temple, leading one by one to the shrine, are also roofed with characteristic towers of smaller size, carrying the eye to the main sikhara. The whole temple enclosure of the Lingaraja is filled with smaller shrines, built on the pattern of the great one.

The Orissan architects were lavish with their exterior decoration, and their sculptors produced works of great merit, but the interiors of their temples are unadorned. In the larger temples the corbelled roofs were often partly supported by iron girders; a striking technical innovation.

Among the most important Orissan temples are the Temple of Visnu-Jagannatha at Puri, still one of the most famous shrines of India, and the "Black Pagoda" of Konark, built in the 13th century. The latter, a temple of Surya, sun-god, was formerly one of the largest and most splendid temples on India, much larger than those of Bhubanesar. The tower, over 200 feet high, has long since fallen, but the great assembly-hall remains. Unlike the other temples of this region that of Konark had the two smaller outer halls completely separate from the main structure, and assembly-hall and tower were built on an imposing platform, round which were carved twelve decorated wheels, 10 feet in diameter. The entrance is reached by a broad flight of steps, flanked on either by prancing horses, the whole representing the chariot in which sun-god rides across the heavens. The court of the temple was rated with large free-standing sculptures of great strength and beauty. The exceptionally frank eroticism of many of the Konarak sculptures has given the "Black Pagoda" a rather infamous reputation. Maithuna figures, of couples closely embracing actually in cottu, are common enough as decorative features of many Indian temples, but those of Konarak are exceptionally vivid. Many suggestions have been made as to the true significance of these figures; it has been suggested that they merely served the mundane purpose of advertising the charms of the devadasis, or temple prostitutes, or that they were intended to represent the world of the flesh, contrast to the bare and austere interior, which symbolized the things of the spirit, probably they were connected, In the minds of their designers, with the sexual mysticism which played so great a part in medieval Indian religious thought No doubt the temple of Konarak was a centre of a flourishing tantric cult.

Under the Candella kings of Bundelkhand a great school of architecture flourished in the 10th and 11th centuries, the chief work of which is a beautiful group of temples at Khajuraho, about 100 miles South-East of Jhansi. These temples are built on a rather different plan from those of Orissa, and are not very large the finest, a Saivite temple known as Kandariya-Mahadeo, was built about A.D.1000, and not more than 100 feet high. The standard type of Khajuraho temple contains a shrine-room or

90 Often referred to by the modern vernacular names, bhog mandir, nat madir, jagmohan, and deul respectively.

sanctuary, an assembly-hall, and I entrance portico. Whereas in the Orissan temple these elements are conceived, rather as separate entities joined together by vestibules, the Khajuraho architects treated them as a whole, and though each part has its own roof they are not structurally separate. The Khaijraho sikhara, like those of most Northern temples, is curvilinear, but differs from the type of Orissa. It is curved for its whole length, and its upward thrust is accentuated by miniature sikharas emerging from the central tower. The crowning discs of lese projections break the upward movement, and remind the observer that the divine is to be found on earth as well as in heaven. The effect of the whole, despite its symmetry, is one of organic and natural growth. The tower, and indeed the whole temple, seems intimately at one with the earth, suggesting an enormous ant-hill, or a high peak surrounded by lesser mountains. Though expressed in the most baroque of styles, the Kandariya-Mahadeo is a striking instance of a feature common in much Indian art, a deeling of unity with nature.

The halls and porticoes of the Khajuraho temples are also crowned with smaller towers, which rise progressively to lead the eye up to the main tower, and thus intensify the impression of a mountain range. While the Orissan roof is pyramidal in pattern. The Khajuraho builders is broken by pillared window openings, which relieve the monotony of the ornately carved stone. A further distinctive feature of on by some as a microcosm of the world, as the open-air sacrifice had been in earlier days. In sculpture, and often in painting also, all the gods were depicted on its walls, every aspect of divine and human existence symbolized. Like Hindu civilization itself, the temple was at once voluptuous and austere, rooted in earth, but aspiring to heaven.

SCULPTURE

In architecture there is no real trace of relationship between the brick houses of Harappa and the stone temples of Hindu India, and the art of building in stone seems to have been learnt slowly from the time of Mauryas onwards. The earliest sculpture of historical times, on the other hand, shows a generic likeness to that of Harappa, which we have already described. From the end of the Indus cities to the rise of the Mauryas over a millennium elapsed, with no surviving work of art to fill it. Somewhere in North India the art of sculpture, no doubt in perishable materials, was certainly kept alive. The patronage of the Mauryan emperors, the influx of western influence, and growing material prosperity, led to its revival, and to the making of stone figures and reliefs which have survived to this day.

The capitals of Asoka's columns, some of which were perhaps made before his reign, are the earliest important sculptures after those of the Indus cities. They are not characteristic of Indian sculpture, though they contain many native features. The famous lions of the Sarnath column and the less famous but more beautiful bull of the column of Rampurva are the work of realistic sculptors, owing something to

Iranian and Hellenist tradition. Yet, if we did not know that the possibility of Western influence existed, we might suggest that the animal sculptures of the columns were those of a school directly descended from the engravers of the Indus seals, which also show a realistic treatment very unusual for so early a civilization. The abaci of the capitals perhaps show native influence more clearly than the crowning figures and animals in lively postures, wheels, representing both the Buddha and the Mauryan World-emperor, and floral and foliate designs in which typical motifs appear side by side with some borrowed from the West. Other than the pillars there are few remains of the Mauryan school, with its high polish and the finish. One beautiful figure, the "Didarganj Yaksi", bears the distinctive brilliant polish of the school, but the treatment of the figure suggests that it is post-Mauryan. The yaksi bears a auri, or ceremonial yak's tail fly-whisk with which kings and gods were fanned; this shows that the figure was made as the attendant on another figure or a object, which has now vanished.

A number of figures of yaksas, somewhat larger than life-size, are the only other important free sculptures of the centuries immediately before Christ. They are strong, bull-necked and heavy, and though not technically perfect, have an elemental solidity rarely found I later sculpture. The treatment of the ample abdomens of these figures has been figures has been compared with that of the abdomen of the Harappa torso and given further evidence of the survival of tradition over the long intervening period the style was the introduction of small transepts to the assembly hall, giving the whole a ground plan not unlike that of a Gothic cathedral.

Like all other schools of architecture, that of Khajuraho made much of carving. Here, in contrast to Orissa, the temples were adorned with sculpture both outside and in, and the halls have beautifully carved domical ceilings. The style of Khajuraho sculpture lacks the solidity and vigour of the best of Orissa, but the wonderful friezes of statuary contain figures of a graceful vitality, warmer and more immediately attractive than those of the Orissan temples.

In Rajasthan and Gujarat are many medieval temples, some of much architectural merit. Here we can only mention the greatest of these Western schools, that which rose under the patronage of the Caulukya or Solanki kings of Gujarat, and flourished from the 11th the 13th centuries. This kingdom was wealthy from the seaborne trade with the Arabs and Persians, and much of the treasure of kings, ministers and merchants alike was expended on beautiful Jaina and Hindu temples.

The most famous buildings of this school are the lovely Jaina shrines of Mount Abu, the style of which is not very different fundamentally from that of Khajuraho. The temples were built on high platforms and usually consisted of a shrine and hall only, without an entrance portico. The sikhara over the shrine, like those of Khajuraho, was adorned with a large number of miniature towers, d the ceilings were in the

form of corbelled domes. Perhaps rough the influence of Muslim architectural styles, these ceilings were carved so as to give the impression of a true dome, the steps of e corbelling being skillfully concealed by the sculptor, and the flat crossbeams, supported on pillars/often being adorned with large brackets meeting at the centre, which gave an arch-like effect, though the true arch was never employed. The most outstanding feature of this style was its minute and lovely decorativeness. The shrines of Mount Abu, made of cool white marble, are covered with the most delicate and ornate carving, especially in the interiors: it is however, rather flaccid and repetitive. In comparison with Bhubanesar, Konarak and Khajuraho the rich decoration of Mount Abu has a flavour of cold lifelessness.

Remains of pre-Musiim secular buildings are few. In the Middle ages kings and chiefs certainly built stone palaces, but of these only the base of Vijayanagara throne-room, and some remains in Ceylon, have survived. Several cities of Rajasthan and Gujarat have finely carved gateways from the medieval period. But, though secular architecture was no doubt highly developed, it is clear that India s architects and masons devoted their greatest energies to temple Gilding. Working according to strict traditions, but snowing much ingenuity and originality within the main standardized pattern, they erected monuments of fantastic beauty with the simplest technical equipment Many patient hands reared the sikharas above the plain, and capped them with great slabs of stone, raised on enormous ramps of earth, like the higher courses of the pyramids of Egypt. Whether or not the architects and craftsmen were conscious of the symbolism, the temple was looked.

The most important sculptural remains of the post-Mauryan are the carvings op the rails and gateways of the great Buddhist sites at Bharhut, Gaya and Sanchi. There is no absolute certainly about the dating of these remains, but the sculpture of Bharhut is in a less highly developed style than that of Gaya and Sanchi, and is probably the earliest, while the gateways of Sanchi, carved with great sureness and skill, are probably the latest of the three. The series Bharhut-Gaya-Sanchi is to some extent confirmed by epigraphic evidence, and we may date Bharhut c. 150 B.C. and Sanchi about the end of the 1st century B.C., with Gaya somewhere between the two. The criteria are not however, absolutely certain, for it is possible that the backward and advanced schools were approximately contemporary.

At Bharhut the upright posts of the stupa railings are carved with yaksas and yaksis, beautifully finished and very decorative, like all the best Indian sculpture, but archaic and uncertain in treatment Their flatness suggests that the artists were trained in working of ivory, and were laboriously learning to translate their skill into a different medium. The medallions of the crosspieces, mostly depicting scenes from Jataka stories, have a similar archaic flavour.

The Gaya railing, enclosing not a stupa but the sacred path where the Buddha walked in meditation after he had obtained enlightenment, shows an advance on

Bharhut The figures are deeper, more vital, more rounded, and the sculptors had by this time evidently gained greater mastery of their technique. Figures are no longer always-carved flat on the stone, but begin to appear in three-quarter poses. Notable at Gaya are the medallions containing human heads, which have such realism that they may well be portraits.

The crowning achievement of early North Indian sculpture is undoubtedly Sanchi. Here a smaller stupa (Stupa II) is adorned I carvings of very archaic character, according to some authorities doer than those of Bharhut. The railings of the main stupa are quite unadorned, but in sharp contrast, the great gateways are carved with a multitude of figures and reliefs. From top to bottom on all sides the massive square uprights and triple architraves are alive with the life of the times. Yaksis smile as they lean in easy graceful poses,91 or serve as brackets to the architrave's which are supported by massive elephants or cheerfully grinning dwarfs. The flat surfaces of the uprights and architrave's are covered with panels depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha or from Jataka stories. Cities are besieged, riders on elephants horses pass in procession, men and women worship sacred shrines, elephants roam the jungle; lions, peacocks, yaksis, nagas, mythical animals and ornate floral designs fill the whole. Some of the motifs are evidently of Mesopotamlan or Persian inspiration, but the whole is typically Indian in its complexity of pattern, its cheerful busy realism, and its exuberance.

The carvings of Sanchi gateways were not carried out according to any preconceived scheme. The sculptors were not commissioned the monastery, but by private patrons, who wished to gain merit beautifying the stupa, and they carved what their patrons told them the way they thought best. Superficially the result was lacking in formal unity, but was endowed with a unity transcending rule and pattern, the unity of a prosperous culture, pious in devotion to its shrines, and delighting in the world it lived in and knew. The visitor, standing on the hill of Sanchi on a sunny winter day, when the wild peacocks walk among the ruins and the great plain shimmers in the hazy distance, gets the overriding impression that this is the work a happy people at one with itself.

Technically the carvings are of high excellence. The sculptors have now fully mastered their material. There treatment, while not of course, realistic in the nineteenth-century sense, has transcended the rather stiff formalism of Bharhut, and is free and alive. The sculpture of Sanchi everywhere gives a sense of certainly; the artists knew what they had to depict, and clearly saw in their mind's eye hoe to do so.

At Bhahut, Gaya and Sanchi, and indeed in all the Buddhist sculpture of this period,

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91 The triohanga, a pose in dancing and dramatics with one leg bent and the body slightly turned at the hips, was favourite with the sculptor from the earliest times. It contrasts sharply with the heretic poses of most ancient art other than that of the Greeks, and given an impression of life and vitality.

the Buddha himself is never shown, but symbolized by such emblems as a wheel, an empty throne, a pair of footprints pipal tree. The obvious reason for this iconographical peculiarity is that he was so venerated that it seemed sacrilegious to portray him, but we have no literary or other evidence to confirm this. The aversion to depicting the Buddha may have been to the fact that, since he had passed quite out of the universe, it thought misleading to show him in human form. In any case the familiar Buddha image of later times is not to be found at these three early Buddhist sites. The schools of Gandhara (the lower Kabul Valley and the upper Indus, around Peshawar) and Mathura, both of which flourished under the Kusana kings, vie for the honour of having produced the first images of the Buddha. Most Indian authorities now believe that the Buddha image originated at Mathura; most-earlier Europeans supported Gandhara, but some recent experts less certain.

The school of Mathura probably began at the end of the 1st century B.C., though some authorities would date it later. Working for centuries in the whittle-spotted red sandstone of the locality, it produced works which were carried far and wide, and had much influence later sculpture. Some of the school's inspiration was Jaina, and at early period the Mathura craftsmen were making votive plaques depicting the cross-legged naked figure of Tirthankara in meditation, which may have inspired the Buddhists to depict their own teacher. Perhaps the most striking remains of the Mathura school are the yaksis from the railings of a stupa, which was probably Jaina. These richly jeweled ladies, their figures exaggeratedly broad of hip and slender of waist, stand in pert attitudes reminiscent of the Indus dancing-girl, and their gay and frank sensuality in a context of piety and renunciation gives another frank sensuality gives example of the remarkable antinomy of the ancient Indian outlook on life, which found nothing incongruous in such a juxtaposition.

Rather outside the main range of Mathura art are the Kusana royal-statues, most of which were found at the nearby village of Mat, where the kings no doubt had a winter residence, with a chapel in the memory of former monarchs was revered. The figures have nearly all been broken by succeeding rulers, and that of the great Kaniska, the most striking of the statues, unfortunately lacks its head. Wearing the dress of Central Asia, a long coat and quilted boots, and grasping in one hand a sword and in the other its sheath, the king stands with legs apart, in an attitude of authority. This statue may be criticized technically as showing no sense of depth, being virtually in two dimensions. The sculptor was evidently working on a theme to which he was not used, but he succeeded in producing a work of much power, suggesting the hieratic royal statues of Egypt.

The early Buddhas and Boddhisattvas ot the Mathura school are happy fleshy figures with little spirituality about them, but later they developed in grace and religious feeling. Though the Mathura school owed much to earlier Indian tradition, it also borrowed from the North-West, and adopted more than one Greco-Roman motif. Through Mathura the style generally known as Gupta developed, and produced

some of the greatest Indian religious sculpture.

The school of Gandhara was evidently influenced by the art of the Roman Empire, and some of its craftsmen may have been Westerners. Though often called Greco-Buddhist, the Greek kingdoms of Bactria and N-W. India had long vanished when this school emerged. It is not to the Greco-Bactrian heirs of Alexander, but to the trade with the West, encouraged by the rising prosperity of Rome and the eastwards march of her legions, that we must attribute this syncretistic school. The Greeks left only a few lovely silver articles, beautiful coins, and one or two other objects, perhaps imported from the West. It was Kaniska and his successors and their wealthy subjects who gave to the school of Gandhara the encouragement and support through which It flourished. The new devotional Buddhism demanded iconic worship, and figures of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas were produced in large numbers, as well as small votive plaques depicting scenes from the Buddha's life or Jataka stories.

The Mathura sculptors drew inspiration for their Buddha images from the burly yaksa figures of the earlier centuries on the one hand and from the meditating Jaina Tirthankara on the other. The Gandhara sculptors had other models in the gods of the Greco-Roman World. Often their inspiration seems almost wholly Western, and It is hard not to believe that some of the Gandhara masters were foreigners from Syria or Alexandria. The school has depreciated in recent years. When all art was judged by classical norms It was thought to be the finest school of Indian art, which once and once only produced work of grace and realism. Now the sculpture of Gandhara is sometimes described as a mree imitation of an imitation, the weak copy of a great art in decline. Neither judgement is fair in an Indian context the style of Gandhara has a rather Inspired flavour, but It is not without originality. The Buddhas of Gandhara, though perhaps lacking in the spirituality of those of the Gupta period, are gentry, graceful and compassionate, while some of the plaques are vivid and energetic. The School continued after the greater Kusanas, though with less prosperous times It produced few works in stone, but many In plaster or stucco. Its Influence was felt far beyond the bounds of India, and can be traced even in China.

While these schools were developing in the North others appeared in the Peninsula. Here, in the Bhaja cave and at Udayagjri in Orissa, very ancient sculpture is to be found, possibly no later than that of Bharhut The great Buddhist cave temples of the Western Deccan contain much sculpture of great merit, perhaps the finest of which are the numerous figures of donors, often carved in high relief on the cave walls. These are frequently in couples, their arms, on one another's shoulders, and seem to be idealized portraits of the wealthy patrons of the Buddhist caves. Such couples are also to be found in early terracottas, and no doubt their originals believed that by piecing their effigies in shrines they would obtain both material and spiritual benefits. It may be that these are the forerunners of the maithuna couples of the medieval temples, but the spirit behind the early dampati pairs seems very different

for these figures have no overt sexual significance. The man usually looks not at his wife but outwards into the hall, while the woman glances downwards, and, quite unlike the bold yaksis of the North, holds her body diffidently, almost timidly, as if rather embarrassed at being stared at in public. We believe that these figures represent the ideals of ancient Indian married life, and are no more esoteric than the family memorial brasses in many English churches.

The region between the lower valleys of the Kishna and Godavari became an important centre of Buddhism at least as early as the 2nd century B.C., and some very ancient sculpture in low relief, intended to Adorn the sides of stupas, is to be found there. This already shows the characteristic elongation of the mature style of Amaravati. In the late Satavahana period (2nd – 3rd century A.D.) the great stupa of Amaravati was adorned with limestone reliefs depicting scenes of the Buddha's life and surrounded with free-standing Buddha figures. The relief medallions are certainly among the greatest works of Indian art Beautifully balanced in composition to fit the circular frames, they convey an intense vitality and sense of rapid movement, quite unexpected in the context of the grave and calm religion they illustrate. The slender, long-legged figures are portrayed in vigorous action, often rising almost to frenzy, as in the famous medallion showing a host of ecstatic demigods carrying the Buddha's begging-bowl to heaven. The Amaravati school had great influence. Its products were carried to Ceylon and South-East Asia and had a marked effect on local styles, while its influence on later South Indian sculpture is also very evident.

Meanwhile in the North the Saka and Kusala invaders had in part retreated and in part merged with the Indigenous population, to make way for the great Gupta Empire. From the point of view of art the Gupta Period is generally taken to include at least the 4th -6th centuries and the first half of the 7th. The plastic remains of this age are comparatively few, but enough survive to show the achievement of the time, if the schools of Bharhut Sanchi and Mathura are marked by a sensual earthiness, and that of Amaravati by vital, excited movement, the Guptan sculpture suggests serenity, security and certainty. It was at this time that India produced some of her most truly religious art, especially in the lovely Buddhas of Samath. Most famous of these is the icon of the Buddha "turning of Wheel of the Law", or preaching his first sermon, which, more than any other Indian sculpture, seems to convey the true message of Buddhism. Surrounded by a large and ornate halo, flanked by two small demigods, the Master sits majestically, his body slender and rounded, plastically so simplified that no trace of muscular contour can be seen, his delicate fingers forming the dharmacakra mudra, which indicates that he is preaching. His face is, as usual, that of a young man, with delicately modelled lips; his half-closed eyes and slight smile tell more graphically and vividly than any of the rather dry Buddhist scriptures his fundamental message, and emphasize not its first part, that the world is full of sorrow, death and decay, but that it is possible to transcend these evils, and reach a state where age and grief no longer affect the mind, and where earthly pleasure is transmuted into serene inner joy.

This great masterpiece, however, illustrates only one aspect of Gupta art. In the region of Gwalior and Jhansi an excellent school of Hindu sculptors existed, and the carvings of the temple of Deogarti, depicting Hindu gods and mythological scenes, show the beginnings of the early medieval style. The splendid figure of the sun-god Surya from Gwalior illustrates another aspect of the outlook of the times. Broad and sturdy, cheerfully smiling, the god looks straight ahead at his worshippers, his right hand raised in blessing-the god of a good-natured, happy people. Equally significant of the spirit of the Gupta Period, if less perfect in execution, is the charming relief of a dancer, accompanied by girl-musicians, found at Pawaya, near Gwalior. Another famous Guptan sculpture is the "Sanchi Torso",92 the delicately but vigorously modelled body of a Boddhlsattva, its smooth contours emphasized by the minutely carved Jeweled collar and belt and the scarf of antelope skin hanging over the left shoulder.

Perhaps the most immediately impressive of all Guptan sculpture; the Great Boar, carved In relief at the entrance of a cave at Udaya-giri, near Bhilsa. The body of the god Visnu, who became a mighty boar to rescue the earth from the cosmic ocean conveys the impression of a great primeval power working or good against the forces of chaos and destruction, and bears a message of hope, strength and assurance. The greatness of the god in comparison with his creation is brought out by the tiny female figure of the personified earth, clinging to his tusk. The deep feeling which inspired the carving of this figure makes it perhaps the only theriomorphic image in the world's art which conveys a truly religious message to modem man.

Sculpture of the medieval period are so numerous that they cannot be discussed here in dottal. By this time iconographical canons were fixed. Every god had his special attributes, which were regularly portrayed in his image; the proportions of body, limbs and features were laid down, and were adhered to with increasing rigidity, but the Indian sculptor succeeded in producing remarkable variety in his now almost hieratic art.

Under the Pala Sena kings of Bihar and Bengal (8th – 12th centuries) both Buddhists and Hindus made fine icons, many in the local black stone. The special characteristic of Pala art is its fine finish; its figures are much decorated and well polished, an often seem rather made of metal than of stone.

The sculpture of Orissa was greater than that of the Palas. The carvings of the temples of Bhubanesar and Konark show a deep sensuous appreciation of eh human form and an expressiveness which gives them a characteristic beauty of their own. The finest Orissan sculptures are those in the courtyard of the Temple of the Sun at Konark, where the forceful horses and the mighty elephant crushing a malefactor in

92 Said by some to be an exceptional Pala Production.

his trunk show a strength of treatment and a feeling for animal form rare in the world's art, and reminiscent of the animal sculpture and ceramics of the Tang dynasty of China.

The Khajuraho temples are covered with figures of divinities and pairs of lovers of wonderful delicacy and grace, and in man other of North India many works of beauty survive, although few can vie with those of Orissa.

In the Deccan individual schools of sculpture appeared. The temples of Aihole and Badami contain fine work of the 5th century onwards, which shows the influence of the Guptan style, with a tendency to elongation perhaps inherited from Amaravati. More important are the sculptures of Mamallapuram, adorning the wonderful complex of rock-temples made by the Pallava kings of Kanci. Most striking of these sculptures is the great relief of the descent of the Ganges, covering a rock face over 80 feet long and nearly 30 feet high. A natural cleft in the rock has been utilized to represent the Sacred River, whgoi is watched on either side by gods, demigods, ascetics and elephants, as she descends from the head of Siva, and who has sinuous snake-spirits (nagas) swimming in her waters. The artists who designed this splendid relief had a sardonic sense of humour, for among the worshipping ascetics they carved the crafty cat, who performed penance in order to lure the mice to their doom. Mamallapuram contains other fine relief sculpture, including an idealized portrait of the versatile king Mahendravikramavarman and his queens, and a number of free-standing animal figures, which are remarkable for their simple strength.

The influence of the Pallava School of sculpture was felt in Ceylon, and also in the Western Deccan. Here the Buddhist carvings of the Ajanta caves, though important, are dwarfed in significance by the wonderful mural paintings. The carvings of the later Ellora caves, on the other hand, especially those of the Kallasanatha Temple, are among the finest sculptures of India. They are chiefly in the form of deep reliefs, giving the effect of free-standing sculpture, and illustrate scenes on mythology. The whole series of reliefs is characterized by balanced design, and a graceful energy akin to that of Amaravati. Of the same school, but a century or two later, are the cave sculptures of Elephants. The rock temple of Siva contains a fine series of deep reliefs, all of which are dwarfed in significance by the colossal Trimurti, which is perhaps the best known of all Ancient Indian sculptures. The three-headed bust of Siva, calm with the calmness of eternity, is so impressive and so religiously inspired that it needs little comment. The serene god is perhaps the highest plastic expression of the Hindu concept of divinity.

After Mamallapuram and Elephanta much stone sculpture was produced in the Peninsula, but though often of great merit it lacked the depth and beauty of the work of the earlier schools. The splendid bronzes of the Colas and their Successors are the most outstanding products of the Dravidian artists of the later Middle Ages.

TERRACOTTAS

While the rich delighted in figures of stone, metal or ivory, poorer folk contented themselves with small images and plaques of clay, no doubt originally painted in bright colours. Nearly every archaeological site in India, from Harappa onwards, has produced many of these terracotta objects. Most are religious. Crude clay figures of goddesses-apparently early forms of Durga, worshipped by the lower classes before her inclusion in the orthodox pantheon-are common, and recall the similar but even cruder mother goddess figurines of Harappa. Other objects little if any religious significance, though they may have been charms or votive offerings; figures of mother and child, a type rare in sculpture, suggest offerings made by childless women, while the numerous figures of a man and a woman, standing in modest poses reminiscent of the donors of the cave temple sculpture, many have been charms for a happy marriage. While many terracottas are crude, others are of fine workmanship and real beauty. Some faces are well characterized and divine heads are sometimes beautifully modelled. The terracotta plaques often much charm.

Most of the terracottas so far found date from the Mauryan to the Gupta period, but the art of modelling in terracotta must have existed earlier, and certainly continued later, for the Buddhist sites of Bihar have yielded many medieval votive plaques of no great artistic interest.

METAL SCULPTURE AND ENGRAVING

Several works of art in metal, very Hellenistic in style, have been found In the North-West, dating from the early centuries of the Christian era. Some of these are quite un-Indian, and may have been improved, or produced by foreign craftsmen, for instance the lovely little en and jewelled reliquary casket from Bimaran. Further afield, in Soviet Central Asia and Northern Afghanistan, have been found beautiful silver cups and other objects, ornamented with motifs usually Hellenistic in inspiration and technique, but showing clear evidence of Indian contacts, Soviet archeologists believe that these are the products of the Greek kingdom of Bactira, and date from the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. Thus they are in no way connected with the Gandhara sculpture of the early centuries of the Christian era, Wholly Indian in style, and dating from pre-Gupta times, is the copper vase from Kulu, on the borders of Kashmir, engraved with a gay procession.

From the Gupta period a number of bronze and copper figures have survived, mostly Buddhist. The most impressive of these is the "Sultanganj Buddha", some 71/2 feet high, now in Brmingham Museum- a graceful figure, dressed in a diaphanous cloak. Like most of the work of the period it conveys a feeling of aliveness, not by attention to realistic detail and proportion, but by the sense of movement in the slightly tilted body, the delicate fingers, lightly clasping the corners of the robe, and the face,

impassively symmetrical yet with a vitality imparted by the delicate moulding of its features.

The use of bronze images in worship seems to have been specially prevalent among Buddhists. The Sultanganj Buddha was found in Bihar one of the great centres of Buddhism, where one of the two great medieval schools of metal sculpture arose, under the patronage of the Pala kings. Pala bronzes are so numerous that there is no doubt that they were mass-produced. They were exported to South-East Asia, where they are still found, and to Nepal and Tibet. Where they provide prototypes from indigenous schools, these images are characterized chiefly by delicacy of design and ornamental detail, and deep religious inspiration is usually lacking. The earliest Nepal bronzes, which go back to our period, are less ornate in design, but are glided and set with semi-precious stones, and give an impression of great brilliance and smoothness.

Other parts of India also produced metal icons, but many of those which have survived have no great artistic value. The Tamils still prefer metal to stone for the images used in temple and domestic worship, and it was in South India, especially in the kingdom of the Colas, that the greatest Indian works of art in metal were made, by a school of bronze-casters which has not been excelled in the world. South Indian bronzes vary in size, but many of the finest specimens are very large and heavy, their pedestals fitted with lugs for carrying in procession. The best specimens of South Indian metal work are of great grace and simplicity, for, though the statues have much ornamentation, this, as in most of the best Indian sculpture, is relieved by areas of bare smooth flesh. Physical features and the contours of face and limb are simplified and idealized, the proportions are rigidly fixed by canons laid down I iconographical textbooks, and every attribute of the deity portrayed is determined by convention. It is surprising that, bound as they were by these rigid rules, the Tamil craftsmen succeeded in producing works of such great beauty and often of considerable individuality. As well as images of the gods and goddesses the Tamil school produced many figures representing the saints of devotional theism and portrait figures of kings and queens, who, in theory, were themselves divine, and whose images were often placed in temples among the lesser divinities surrounding the chief god.

Of the latter class the finest figures are the life-size 16th century statues of King Krisna a Deva Raya and two of his chief queens, which still stand in a temple at Tirumalai. The faces of the queens seem quite conventional, though very beautiful, but that of the great king himself is almost certainly intended to give some idea of his actual appearance. Their hands pressed together in the gesture called anjali, to mark their homage and respect to the gods, their large eyes half closed, these three dignified figures seem to represent all that was good and noble in the old Hindu ideals of kingship, and, looking at them, we can understand why the king made so deep an impression on the Portuguese envoys.

The greatest and most triumphant achievements of Tamil bronze casting are undoubtedly the dancing Shivas, of which there are many examples dating from the 11th century onwards. It was as "Lord of the Dance" (Nataraja) that the Tamil masters specially delighted in portraying the god-a graceful young man, his four arms delicately posed, often with a flame in the open palm of one hand and a halo of flames encircling him, one foot firm on the back of a demon, and the other raised in a posture well know in the Indian dance. Thus the god appears as the very essence of vital, ordered movement, eternal youth, and ethereal light. This is not the European conception of the highest godhead, but, once the religious background is understood, even the European can recognize in the finest specimens of the dancing Siva a true religious inspiration, a wholly successful effort at depicting in plastic terms divine true beauty and joy.

An important school of-bronze casting existed in Ceylon, and produced works similar in style to those of South India. The finest metal product of Ceylon is undoubtedly the lovely large figure of a goddess, generally relived to be that of a Buddhist Tara, but perhaps Parvati, the wife of Siva. This lovely and delicate casting, now in the British Museum, can hold its own with the greatest products of the South Indian bronzesmith.

Nearly all Indian bronzes were made by the "cire perdue" process. The figure was first designed in wax, which was covered with coating of clay. The whole was then heated, so that the wax melted away, leaving a mould to be filled with molten metal. Larger standing figures, such as the Sultanganj Buddha, which weighs near a ton, were often made in two parts which were then welded together.

PAINTING

Literary references alone would prove that painting was a very highly developed art in ancient India. Palaces and the homes of the rich were adorned with beautiful murals, and smaller painting were made on prepared boards. Not only were there professional artist, but many men and women of the educated classes could ably handle, brush.

Though now all in very bad condition the surviving remains of ancient Indian painting are sufficient to show its achievement. They consist almost entirely of murals in certain of the cave temples. No doubt most temples were painted In some way, and the statuary was brightly coloured, as it often Is in Hindu temples today, and here and there more elaborate schemes of mural decoration were carried out A few caves in outlying places contain rough painted sketches of no special merit, often primitive in style, and believed by many authorities to be prehistoric. Some of the artificial caves dedicated to religious purposes, however, give us samples of the work of highly developed schools of painting, and few would dispute that the murals greatest

surviving paintings of any ancient civilization.

The cave paintings of Ajanta are often referred to as frescos, but this term is incorrect, for a fresco is painted while the plaster is still damp, and the murals of Ajanta were made after it had set. The walls were first covered with a costing of clay or cowdung bound together with straw or hair, and then finished with white gypsum. Considering the climate the surface has stood well, but in many places it has flaked away, and even since they were first copied in the last century the condition of the paintings has deteriorated. The pigments, on the other hand, are still remarkably fresh; in their original state the paintings must have been of great brilliance, and their colours are even now clear and well contrasted. The artists worked in the dim caves by light reflected from outside by metal mirrors.

The paintings in Cave X have been shown with fair certainty to date from before the beginning of the Christian era, while those of Caves I and XVI are from perhaps as much as six centuries later. The earlier paintings are more sharply outlined and the later show more careful modelling, but there is no good evidence of a progressively developing style, as in contemporary sculpture, and the differences may be accounted for by the personal styles of the craftsmen who supervised the work in the respective caves. The Murals chiefly depict scenes from the life of the Buddha and the Jatakas. No frame divides one scene from the next but they blend one into the other, the minor figures and the pattern skillfully leading the eye to the central figures of each scene. There is no perspective, but an illusion of depth is given by placing the background figures somewhat above those in the foreground. The effect of this convention is rather like that of a photograph taken with a telescopic camera, and makes the figures stand out from the flat wall as though coming to meet the observer.

Though painted for religious purposes the murals of Ajanta bear rather a secular than a religious "message. Here, even more vividly than, at Sanchi, we see the whole life of ancient India in panorama. Here are princes in their palaces, ladies in their harems, coolies with loads slung over their shoulders, beggars, peasants and ascetics, together with all the many beasts and birds and flowers of India, in fact the whole life of the times, perpetuated on the dim walls of the caves by the loving hands of many craftsmen. Everything is gracefully and masterfully drawn and delicately modelled.

Among the many masterpieces of Ajanta we must mention the figure of a handsome young man, his body bent slightly in the pose called tribhanga, loved by Indian sculptors and artists, with jewelled crown on his head, and a white lotus in his right hand. His smooth features betray gentle sorrow, and his eyes look downward compassionately, as if at something far below him. Around him are apsarases, or heavenly damsels, and divine minstrel, all much smaller than the central figure, who

is the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara Padmapani, the Lord who Looks Down in Compassion. Here, once more, a work of deep religious feel in appears among the cheerfully sensuous scenes of everyday life. The Bodhisattva, for all his jewels and his smooth youthfulness, has share the sorrows of the world; his gentle eyes have seen countless ages of pain, and his delicately formed lips have spoken words of consolation to countless sufferers. The artist of the Bodhisattva has conveyed his message- the universe is not indifferent to the sorrows and strivings of its creatures.

Religious feeling of a different type is found in the painting I the glorified Buddha, begging his daily bread form a woman child believed to represent his wife Yasodhara and his son Rahula. The lovely portrayal of the two minor figures is scarcely noticed against the majesty of the Master, whose calm features and robed body convey, like the Sarnath Buddha, the serenity of self-transcendence.

A few other paintings are to be found elsewhere. Those on the walls of the veranda of a cave at Bagh, some hundred miles to the North of Ajanta, depict a procession of elephants, perhaps more, impressive in composition than anything Ajanta has to offer and, a lovely scene of a dancer and women musicians. Traces of paintings in the Ajanta style are to found in other Deccan caves, notably at Badami and Ellora. Further south, in the Tamil country, a Jaina cave at a place called Sitannvasal has yielded a fine, though much decayed, mural.

Some of the best-preserved paintings of these schools are to found in Ceylon. In the centre of the island a great rock, Sigiriya the "Lion Mountain", rises sharply for 600 feet above the surrounding plain. Here, at the end of the 5th century, the parricide king Kasyapa I built a palace and a fortress. Kasyapa, evidently a megalomaniac, was so convinced of his own divinity that he tried to identify his rock-fortress with heaven, and had demigods and heavenly beings painted on the bare walls of the rock, to show his subjects that he transcended them all. Nearly all these paintings have vanished under the hot sun and driving monsoon rain, but half way up the rock face, preserved by an overhanging ledge, are the figures of twenty one apsarases immersed from their hips downwards in banks of cloud.93 These charming ladies, toying with flowers in languid poses, are so freshly preserved that one can hardly believe that they were painted 1,500 years ago.

The surviving traces of medieval Hindu painting, at Tanjore, Vijayanagara Polonnaruva in Ceylon, and elsewhere, indicate that there was some technical decline after the 8th century. Outlines become sharper, and the delicate modelling of the earlier period is lacking, but the achievement is still considerable. Scarcely anything survives from this period in good enough preservation to make a

93 Until recently these figures were thought to be portraits of Kasyapa's queens and concubines, and some of the faces seem to show individual character. Some authorities might still support the older theory, but the context of the paintings leaves little doubt that the above interpretation is correct.

satisfactory reproduction, but what can still be seen shows that the tradition of mural painting continued down to the Muslim invasion.

After the spread of Islamic influence the Indian painter turned his attention mainly to miniatures and book illustration, deriving much inspiration from Persian models. Literary evidence shows that miniature painting existed long before the coming of the Muslims, however, and a few examples have survived from the 11th and 12th centuries from Bihar, Bengal and Nepal. These little pictures show great delicacy and skill, but they lack the comparative realism of Ajanta, and the figures are almost unmodelled. They are the products of a formalized Buddhism, the religious inspiration of which was languishing, and which was largely detached from contact with everyday life. Unlike the Ajanta murals, they are probably the work of monks, and not of secular craftsmen.

The city made of Central Asia have preserved paintings which, though not strictly Indian, owe much to Indian inspiration. The earliest of these surround a colossal rock-cut Buddha at Bamiyan in Afghanistan and are older than most of the paintings at Ajanta. The many murals and paintings on boards found at sites, in Chinese Turkistan and other parts of Central Asia are mostly somewhat later, and show greater deviation from Indian models, though their debt to India is quite evident. They date from a, period when the trade route to China was wide open, and give proof of the debt which Chinese art, despite its very individual character, owes to India.

MINOR ARTS

The excavations at Taksasila and other sites of the North-West have revealed fine jewellery, with semi-precious stones set in gold filigree, much in the manner of the Indian jewellery of the present day. The Bimaran Casket, and a few other objects in gold and silver are delicately worked, as are the crystal relic caskets found in Buddhist sites in many parts of India. Engraved intaglio gems from the Northwestern sites are usually of no great artistic merit, and nearly all these small objects of art show the influence of western models, while some may well have been imported.

Though little survives, much beautiful work was done in ivory. Guilds of ivory carvers are mentioned in inscriptions and their profession was evidently a well-patronized and honourable one of surviving ivory work the most interesting if not the most beautiful specimen is a small statuette of a goddess, found at Herculaneum, no doubt imported with spices and fine textiles via Egypt. More beautiful are the ivory plaques, originally fastened to the lids and sides of boxes, found at the Kusana sites of Begram, some fifty miles west of Kabul. Though discovered in the region most open to Western influence, the designs of these plaques are peruely Indian in inspiration, and they were either imported from India proper or mad by craftsmen who had learnt their trade from Indian masters. The figures are outlined with deep-

cut lines, ant although only lightly modelled, give a wonderful impression of depth. Their delicacy and grace are unexcelled in any work of art of ancient India. The art of Ivory carving has continued down to the present day both in India and Ceylon, but it has never again produced works as lovely as these.

Since they delighted in minute detail and gave great care to the finish of their productions it is surprising that the Indians did not develop their coinage artistically. Ancient Indian coins are generally crude and ugly. Only under the Gupta emperors did they approach the status of works of art, and even the Gupta gold coins are but work of art of the second order. They have originality and charm, how, ever. Thus Chandra Gupta I lovingly gazes at his chief queen Kumaradevi; Samudra Gupta, enthroned, performs on the harp; Chandra Gupta II slays a rhinoceros; and Kumara Gupta I rides on splendid elephant. After this, however the gold of coin production deteriorated rapidly, and medieval kings who patronized great artists and craftsmen were satisfied with coins of the crudest type.

Exceptional are the lovely large silver coins minted by the Greek kings of Bactria which bear some of the finest numismatic portraits in the world; but the inspiration of these coins is purely Hellenistic, and they were no doubt designed by Greek craftsmen. It is unlikely that they circulated widely in India, where the Greek kings issued cruder bilingual coins, in a style followed by the later Sakas and Kusanas.

MUSIC

There is some evidence to show that the Aryans knew the heptatonic scale, and the instructions for intoning the hymns of the Sama Veda show that the style of liturgical singing in Vedic times was rather like that of medieval plain chant and has been preserved fairly accurately by the brahmans down to the present day. Between this and the early centuries of the Christian era we have little knowledge of the Christian era we have little knowledge of the progress of Indian music, but in the latter period an anonymous writer composed a textbook on drama, music and dancing, which, accordance with the custom of the time, he attributed to the ancient sage Bharata, and which has survived to this day. The Bharata Natyasastra is our earliest Indian authority on these three arts, al shows that by this time India had a fully developed system of music which, differed little from that of present-day Indian "classical" music. Anyone who has heard a performance on the vina by a good South Indian musician has probably heard music much as it was played over a thousand years ago. For this reason, and because of the highly technical nature of the subject, we treat ancient Indian music briefly.

The basic scale is heptatonic its seven notes94 corresponding approximately to those

94 Called Sadja, rsabha, gandhara, madhyama, dhaivata and nisada, nowadays generally abbreviated to sa, ri, ga, ma, pa, Dha and ni.

of the Europena major scale. They may be elaborated with half-tones or quarter-tones (Sruti). There are twenty-two quarter-tones in the octave, which occur in the following order:

Sa ri ga ma pa dha ni sa

From this diagram it will be seen theat the notes sa, ma and pa (approximately the European do, fa and so) may have as many, there degrees of sharpness. The quarter-tones of Indian music are chiefly noticeable in ornamentation, when they are used with striking effect, but they also occur to some extent in melody, so that the untutored Westerner may well think the singer or musician is out of tune.

As well as the scale based on the note sa, corresponding to the Eurpean major, other scales may be based on other notes of the seven, thus resembling the modes of ecclesiastical music.

Besides the grama, which we have translated "scale", there are other basic classifications of tune-types, chief of which is the raga. A raga is a series of five or more notes, upon which a melody is based. Over thirty ragas are mentioned in the Bharata Natyasastra, and the total has since grown considerably until now hundreds have been enumerated. According to orthodox theory there are six basic ragas, the others being raginis, personified as the wives of the masculine ragas. The six original ragas are variously given, the oldest list, that of Bharata, being as follows.

Bhairava: C, Db, E, F, G, Ab, B, C.
Kausika: C, Eb, F, Ab, Bb, C.
Hindola: C, E, F*, A, B, C.
Dipaka: C, Db, E, F*, A, B, C.
Sriraga: C, Db, E, F*, G, Ab, B, C.
Megha: C, D, F, G, A, C.

The ragas are classified according to the time of day or night for which they are most appropriate. Thus, of the examples above, Bhairava is suitable for performance at dawn, Megha in the morning, Dipaka and Sriraga in the afternoon, and Kausika and Hindola at night. Bhairava is associated with awe and fear, Kausika with joy and laughter, Hindola, Dipaka and Sriraga with love, and Megha with peace and calm. It is interesting that the raga most closely corresponding to the European major scale, Pancama, is associated with the night and love in the Indian system.

There is no harmony in Indian music, and the melody, which usually proceeds by conjunct intervals (i.e. adjacent notes on the keyboard), never suggests a harmonic basis, as do many European melodies; The tune is sustained by a drone note and by drumming. The subtle and complex cross rhythms of Indian music take the place of

harmony and counterpoint in the ear of the trained listener. Like the ancient Greeks the Indians delighted and still delight in unusual times, such as 5/4 and 7/4. The tala, or rhythmic figure is, after the raga, the most important element of Indian music. Bharata recognizes twenty-two talas, and since then many more have been introduced.

The Indian musician was, and still is, an improviser. While a smile melody could be recorded in alphabetic notation India never devised a true musical notation and the music of her ancient masters has vanished forever. As at the present day, every performance was virtually a new composition. The musician would choose his raga and tala and, often starting from a well-known melody, would elaborate his theme in the form of three variations, working up to a climax of complex and rapid ornamentation.

The chief musical instrument was the vina, usually loosely translated "lute". The term was originally applied to the bow-harp often with ten strings, of a type very similar to the small harp used in ancient Egypt and the early civilization of the Middle East. By the end of the Gupta period this instrument had begun to go out of fashion, and its place was largely taken by a lute with a pear-shaped body, played either what the fingers or with a plectrum. This in turn was superseded in the 8th century by the early form of the modern vina, with long finger-board and small round body, often made of a dried gourd. Bowed instrument may have been known, but seem to have been little used in polite circles until the coming of the Muslims. Flutes and reed instruments of various kinds were widely played, but instruments of the trumpet type were rarely used except as signals. Of these the most mentioned was the conch, the shell of a large molluse, clown through its sawn-off point before battle, as an invocation to a deity, and on important occasions generally; its sound was very auspicious. Percussion instruments were numerous and varied. The smaller drums, played in pairs with the fingers as at present, were looked on as almost essential for any musical performance. Larger drum were used for state occasions, and there was a wide range of cymbals, gongs and bells.

The evidence of Bharata shows that, as at the present day, the Indian of two thousand years ago preferred the throaty, rather nasal type of singing, which comes more naturally than that which Europe has learnt to appreciate. The singing voice was often treated as a musical instrument, the vocalist performing long impromptu variation on a simple melody, sung to a single phrase, often an invocation to a deity.

In the late medieval period music became largely the preserve of professionals, who though much in demand by the well-to-co-people who employed them, were of low caste. This was not the case in India's greatest days, when a knowledge of music was looked on as an essential attribute of a gentlemen. "The man who knows nothing of literature, music or art," runs an ancient Indian proverb, "is nothing but a beast without the beast's tail and horns".

Like music, Indian dancing has changed little with the centuries, and the best modem Indian dancers, such as Uday Shankar and Ram Gopal, still dance according to the rules of the Bharata Natyasastra. Dancing (natya) was closely connected with acting (natya); in fact both are forms of the same word, the latter being a Prakritism, and gesture, the dance chiefly music and gesture. As in most other civilizations there is little doubt that the Indian drama, which we consider in the following chapter, developed from ritual miming song and dance.

Indian dancing is not merely a thing of legs and arms alone, but of the whole body. Every movement of the little finger or the eye-brow is significant, and must be fully controlled. The poses and gestures are classified in detail, even as early as the Bharata Natyasastra, which mentions thirteen poses of the head, thirty-six of the eyes, nine of the neck, thirty-seven of the hand, and ten postures of the body. Later texts classify many more poses and gestures, every one of which depicts a specific emotion or object. With so many possible combinations the dancer can tell a whole story, easily comprehensible to the observer who knows the convention.

The most striking feature of the Indian dance is undoubtedly the hand-gesture (mudra). By a beautiful and complicated code, the hand alone is capable of portraying not only a wide range of emotions, but gods, animals, men, natural scenery, actions and so on. Some hundreds of mudras are classified in later textbooks, and they are used not only in the dance, but, as we have seen, in religious worship arid iconography.

This highly developed dance style demanded years of training, and was probably always; chiefly performed by professionals, though there are references in literature to princes and their ladies dancing in their palaces. Ancient India was rich in folk-dances, which were performed at festivals. In later years only low caste people would think of dancing in public, but there seems to have been no social taboo on the art in ancient times, except perhaps for practising brahmans.