
ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF INDIAN WAR
OF INDEPENDENCE

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

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

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

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

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

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

EMERGENCY

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

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

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

AN EVALUATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

JAYPRAKASH NARAYAN ON VINOBA BHAVE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN: KEEPER OF INDIA'S CONSCIENCE

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

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

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

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

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

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

Congress Socialist

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

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

In British Jails

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

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

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

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

Sarvodaya Leader

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

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

Taming the Naxals

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"This society, its glorious history and the heritage of our forefathers, the sacrifices of the builders of this country and their achievements and the free- dom that we have won - you are the inheritors of it all and it is for you to make the best use of it...Your word has far reaching effect. There is the force of spiritualism and thousands of years of our ancient culture at

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

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

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

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

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

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

In Colombo

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

Unconventional

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

Nationalist

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

A Rebel

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

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

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

News of these dramatic protests against caste barriers spread and Gora's name started to become widely known in Andhra, as a strange saint-like character who preached atheism. He also gave demonstrations of fire walking to show that there was nothing mysterious about it, and that it could easily be done 'because of the presence of water vapour which provides a protective covering for the feet'. However, it was said that many villagers were more impressed by the fire walking than by the scientific explanation which Gora provided.

GANDHI AND GORA

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

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

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

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

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

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

True Gandhian

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

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

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

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

Truth

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

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

Pomplessness

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

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

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

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

The Great March

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

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

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

Sevagram to Delhi on Foot

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

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

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

Satyagraha and Discussion with Prime-minister Nehru

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

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

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

International Recognition

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

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

Truth Seeker

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

Gora was Unique

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

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

Early Years

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

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

America & Marxism

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

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

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

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

Congress Socialist Party-Birth of a Party

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

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

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

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

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

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

FREEDOM FIGHTER

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

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

RETURN TO INDIA

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

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

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

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

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

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

Post Independence

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Anecdotes

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

Quotes

"Caste restricts opportunity. Restricted opportunity constricts ability. Constricted ability further restricts opportunity. Where

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

in on him. Lohia fled to Nepal's dense jungles to evade the British. There he met the Nepalese people and Koirala brothers (freedom fighters in Nepal), who remained Lohia's allies for the rest of their lives.

Lohia was captured in May of 1944, in Bombay. Lohia was taken to a prison in Lahore, notorious throughout India for its tormenting environment. In the prison he underwent extreme torture. His health was destroyed but his courage remained. Even though he was not as fit his courage and willpower strengthened through the ordeal. Under Gandhiji's pressure the Government released Lohia and his comrade Jayaprakash Narayan. A huge crowd waited to give the two a hero's welcome. Lohia decided to visit a friend in Goa to relax. Lohia was alarmed to learn that the Portuguese government had censured the people's freedom of speech and assembly. He decided to deliver a speech to oppose the policy but was arrested even before he could reach the meeting location. The Portuguese government relented and allowed the people the right to assemble. The Goan people weaved Lohia's tale of unselfish work for Goa in their folk songs.

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

A Student in the Motherland's Service

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Humanity

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

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

The New Party

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

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

Lohia's Views

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

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

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

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

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

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

"A Daily Income of Twenty-one Paise"

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

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

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

A Versatile Genius

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

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

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

'Rama, Krishna, Shiva'

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

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

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

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

Decentralization

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

In the International World

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

RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY : THE FATHER OF MODERN INDIA

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

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

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

KING AMONGST MEN

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

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

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

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

The Man Who Found Unity in God

Ram Mohan moved to Kolkata in 1797 and started a minor lending business to earn a modest living for a while. Shortly before his father's death in 1803 Ram Mohan moved North to Mushidabad with a job with the *East India Company*. In 1805 he published *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* (A Gift to Monotheism)-written in *Persian* with an introduction in *Arabic* in which he preached *unity of God*. This publication antagonised a section of the muslim community.

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

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

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

The Man Who Fought Superstitions

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

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

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

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

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

He went on to recollect the history:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Education

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

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

Travels

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Regard for Hinduism

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

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

Education for the Progress of the County

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

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

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

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

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

Service to Literature

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

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

Rabindranath Tagore and Bankimchandra followed in his footsteps.

Ram Mohan wrote lyrics also.

With the Poor

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

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

A man was following them.

"Brothers!" he said.

The labourers turned back in wonder.

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

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

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

Love of Independence

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

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

Have you Heard of 'The League of Nations'?

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

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

The First Editor

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

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

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

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

Brahma Samaj

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

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

Ram Mohan in England

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

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

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

Raja Ram Mohan Roy

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Language Policy of the British Raj-A Glimpse

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

the Theosophical convention held at Madras in 1884, or the Indian Union started by Mr. A.O. Hume might have had their influence on the founding of the Indian National Congress. Whatever might be the origin and whoever might have given the original idea, we come to the conclusion, as Sitaramayya (1935) points out, that the idea was in the air that the need of such an organization was being felt, that Mr. Allen Octavian Hume took the initiative, and that it was in March 1885 that the first notice was issued convening the first meeting of the Indian National Union in December 1885 at Poona, that what had been a vague idea floated generally in the air and influencing simultaneously the thought of thoughtful Indians in the North and the South, the East and the West, assumed the definite shape and became a practical programme of action.

Mr. Hume's Idea of an Indian National Congress

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

The First Circular Announcing The Indian National Congress

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A great lesson here, for all of us.

Entry of Indian Languages in the Deliberations of the Congress

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Causes

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

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

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Frictions

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

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

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

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

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Economics

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Start of the War

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

their commanding officers. They then liberated the 3rd Regiment and attacked the European cantonment where they killed all the Europeans they could find, including women and children, and burned the houses. The rebelling forces were then engaged by the remaining British forces in Meerut. Meerut had the largest percentage of British troops of any station in India: 2,038 European troops with twelve field guns versus 2,357 sepoys lacking artillery. Some commentators believe that the British forces could have stopped the sepoys from marching on Delhi, but the British commanders of the Meerut garrison were extraordinarily slow in reacting to the crisis. They did not even send immediate word to other British cantonments that a rebellion was in process. It seems likely that they believed they would be able to contain the Indians by themselves.

On 11 May the rebels reached Delhi, where they were joined by other Indians from the local bazaar, and attacked and captured the Red Fort (Lal Qila), killing five British, including a British officer and two women. Lal Qila was the residence of the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar II and the sepoys demanded that he reclaim his throne. At first he was reluctant, but eventually he agreed to the demands and became the leader of the rebellion.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Support and Opposition

The rebellion now spread beyond the armed forces, but it did not result in a complete popular uprising as its leaders hoped. The Indian side was not completely unified. While Bahadur Shah Zafar was restored to the imperial throne there was a faction that wanted the Maratha rulers to be enthroned as well, and the Awadhis wanted to retain the powers that their Nawab used to have.

The war was mainly centred in northern and central areas of India. Delhi, Lucknow, Kanpur, Jhansi, Bareilly, Arrah and Jagdishpur were the main centres of conflict. The Bhojpurias of Arrah and Jagdishpur supported the Marathas. The Marathas, Rohillas and the Awadhis supported Bahadur Shah Zafar and were against the British.

There were calls for jihad by some leaders including the millenarian Ahmedullah Shah, taken up by the Muslims,

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Delhi

The British were slow to strike back at first but eventually two columns left Meerut and Simla. They proceeded slowly towards Delhi and fought, killed, and hanged numerous Indians along the way. At the same time, the British moved regiments from the Crimean War, and diverted European regiments headed for China to India.

After a march lasting two months, the British fought the main army of the rebels near Delhi in Badli-ke-Serai and drove them back to Delhi.

The British established a base on the Delhi ridge to the north of the city and the siege began. The siege of Delhi lasted roughly from the 1st of July to the 31st of August. However the encirclement was hardly complete-the rebels could easily receive resources and reinforcements.

Later the British were joined by the Punjab Movable Column of Sikh soldiers and elements of the Gurkha Brigade. Eagerly-awaited heavy siege guns did not guarantee an easy victory against the numerical superiority of the sepoy. Eventually the British broke through the Kashmiri gate and began a week of street fighting. When the British reached the Red Fort, Bahadur Shah had already fled to Humayun's tomb. The British had retaken the city.

The British proceeded to loot and pillage the city. A large number of the citizens were slaughtered in retaliation for the Europeans killed by rebel Indians. Artillery was set up in the main mosque in the city and the neighbourhoods within the range of artillery were bombarded.

These included the homes of the Muslim nobility from all over India, and contained innumerable cultural, artistic, literary and monetary riches. An example would be the loss of most of the works of Mirza Asadullah Khan Ghalib, thought of as the greatest south Asian poet of that era.

The British soon arrested Bahadur Shah, and the next day British officer William Hodson shot his sons Mirza Mughal, Mirza Khizr Sultan, and Mirza Abu Bakr under his own authority. Their heads were presented to their father the next day.

began a barrage of artillery and musket fire into the compound. Lawrence was one of the first casualties. The rebels tried to breach the walls with explosives and bypass them via underground tunnels that led to underground close combat. After 90 days of siege, numbers of British were reduced to 300 loyal sepoys, 350 British soldiers and 550 non-combatants.

This action quickly became known as the Siege of Lucknow. On the 25th of September a thousand soldiers of the Highlanders under General Sir Henry Havelock joined them, in what was known as 'The First Relief of Lucknow'. In October another Highlander unit under Sir Colin Campbell came to relieve them and on the 18th of November they evacuated the compound women and children first. They fled to now-retaken Cawnpore.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Jhansi

Jhansi was a Maratha-ruled princely state in Bundelkhand. When the Raja of Jhansi died without an male heir in 1853, Jhansi was annexed to the British Raj by the Governor-General of India under the Doctrine of Lapse.

His widow, Rani Lakshmi Bai, protested the annexation on the grounds that she had not been allowed to adopt a successor, as per Indian custom.

When the Rebellion broke out, Jhansi quickly became a centre of the rebellion. A small group of British officials took refuge in Jhansi's fort, and the Rani negotiated their evacuation. When the British left the fort, they were massacred by the rebels. Although the massacre might have occurred without the Rani's consent, the British suspected her of complicity in the slaughter, despite her protestations of innocence.

In September and October 1857, the Rani led the successful defence of Jhansi from the invading armies of the neighbouring rajas of Datia and Orchha. In March 1858, the British Army, led by Colonel Rose advanced on Jhansi, and laid siege to the city. The British captured the city, but the Rani fled in disguise.

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Other Areas

On 1 June 1858, Rani Lakshmi Bai and a group of Maratha rebels captured the fortress city of Gwalher (Gwalior) from the

Indian Rebellion of 1857-Reorganization

The rebellion also saw the end of the British East India Company's rule in India. In August, by the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, power was transferred to the British Crown. A secretary of state was entrusted with the authority of Indian affairs and the Crown's viceroy in India was to be the chief executive. The British embarked on a programme of reform, trying to integrate Indian higher castes and rulers into the government and abolishing the East India Company.

The viceroy stopped land grabs, decreed religious tolerance and admitted Indians into civil service, albeit mainly as subordinates. The British also increased the number of British soldiers in relation to native ones; henceforth 'Indian' regiments would be made-up of at least one-third British soldiers and only these would be allowed to handle artillery. In 1877 Queen Victoria took the title of Empress of India on the advice of her Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli.

earlier years the Brahmo Samaj, like the rest of society, could not however, conceptualize, in that feudal-colonial era, a free India as it was influenced by the European Enlightenment (and its bearers in India, the British Raj) although it traced its intellectual roots to the Upanishads. Their version of Hinduism, or rather Universal Religion (similar to that of Ramakrishna), although devoid of practices like sati and polygamy that had crept into the social aspects of Hindu life, was ultimately a rigid impersonal monotheistic faith, which actually was quite distinct from the pluralistic and multifaceted nature of the way the Hindu religion was practiced. Future leaders like Keshub Chunder Sen were as much devotees of Christ, as they were of Brahma, Krishna or the Buddha. It has been argued by some scholars that the Brahmo Samaj movement never gained the support of the masses and remained restricted to the elite, although Hindu society has accepted most of the social reform programmes of the Brahmo Samaj. It must also be acknowledged that many of the later Brahmos were also leaders of the freedom movement.

The renaissance period after the Indian Rebellion of 1857 saw a magnificent outburst of Bengali literature. While Ram Mohan Roy and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar were the pioneers, others like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee widened it and built upon it. The first significant nationalist detour to the Bengal Renaissance was given by the brilliant writings of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. Later writers of the period who introduced broad discussion of social problems and more colloquial forms of Bengali into mainstream literature included the great Saratchandra Chatterjee.

Later, Ramakrishna Paramhansa, a great saint of Bengal, is thought to have realized the mystical truth of all religions, and to have reconciled the conflicting Hindu sects ranging from Shakta tantra, Advaita Vedanta and Vaishnavism, as well as other religions like Christianity and Islam. In fact Ramakrishna made famous the Bengali saying: Jato Mat, Tato Path. (All religions are different paths to the same God). The Vedanta movement prospered principally through his disciple and sage, Swami Vivekananda who on his return from the highly successful Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893 and subsequent lecture tour in America, became a revered national idol.

learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries after the long winter of the dark medieval period. A serious comparison was started by the dramatis personae of the Bengal renaissance like Keshub Chunder Sen, Bipin Chandra Pal and M. N. Roy. For about a century, Bengal's conscious awareness and the changing modern world was more developed and ahead of the rest of India. The role played by Bengal in the modern awakening of India is thus comparable to the position occupied by Italy in the European renaissance. Very much like the Italian renaissance, it was not a mass movement; but instead restricted to the upper classes. Though the Bengal Renaissance was the "culmination of the process of emergence of the cultural characteristics of the Bengali people that had started in the age of Hussein Shah, it remained predominantly Hindu and only partially Muslim." There were some examples of Muslim intellectuals such as Saiyed Amir Ali and Mosharraf Hussain. Some scholars in Bangladesh, now hold Bengal Renaissance in a different light. As Professor Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan of the department of Islamic History and Culture of Chittagong University, observes:

During nineteenth century A.D., Bengal produced a galaxy of reform movements among the Hindus as well Muslims... the Islamic reform movements such as Faraizi, Tariquah-i-Muhhamadiyah, and Taaiyni and Ahl-i-Hadith, occupied a conspicuous position amongst them. These Islamic movements were revivalist in character... these Islamic movements were born of the circumstances, which had also given birth to the contemporary Hindu reform movements such as Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj, which thrived in Bengal side by side with them... Raja Ram Mohan Roy's movement is generally regarded as 'Renaissance movement'.

It is called by some as 'Hindu Renaissance' and by others as 'Bengali Renaissance' movement. It should nevertheless be observed that compared with the European 'Renaissance model', it was a Renaissance with a difference, especially, deeply inlaid by a revivalist make-up of pristine Hindu or Aryan religious spirit... Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Renaissance aimed at resuscitating the pristine Aryan spirit, 'Unitarianism of God', with the help of modern Western rationalist spirit.

entire society in darkness, and no light of hope was visible anywhere. The Muslim rule was disintegrating, and that of the East India Company had not yet established itself. The result was an unprecedented political chaos and confusion.

The political disorder was not the only catastrophe that had befallen India. Of immeasurably greater consequence was the tragic fact that at this fateful hour, India had lost her links with her own supreme realizations, her universal and eternal thoughts. Indeed, all the vital links of the society lay paralysed. Urban and rural life, religious and educational institutions, law and administration, agriculture and industry, trade and commerce—all these were in a state of complete prostration. Dead, meaningless habits and decadent traditions stifled all creative efforts in the fields of art and culture, religion and politics. The stream of ancient Hindu ideals, based on the original scriptures—the Vedas and the Upanishads—had lost its way in the arid desert of superstition, bigotry and perversions. In place of critical analysis, there flourished unreasoned acceptance; instead of deference to authority after judgement, there ruled blind acceptance; where the torch of adventure had lighted the spirit, there reigned formal dogmatism. The Indian mind had become both lethargic and fearful. India had lost her youth.

At this crossroad of history, what India needed most was the advent of a man who would with one mighty sweep clear away the accumulated debris of orthodoxy and unreason, who would rediscover India's imperishable thoughts and who, by doing so, would rekindle the spirit of the whole nation. This historical need was served by the emergence of the man who can truly be called the father of modern India—Ram Mohan Roy.

It was Renan who called Petrarch "the first modern man", and by "modern man" he meant the freed individual who had achieved full emancipation of his spirit. Swami Vivekananda, another maker of modern India, attributed to Ram Mohan the same quality when he described him as "the first man of new, regenerate India".

The foundation of modern India that Ram Mohan laid was a great synthesis—a synthesis among the three conflicting cultures, three conflicting civilizations—the Hindu, the Muslim and the

Among the problems that Ram Mohan Roy faced, the priority belonged to social reform rather than man's position in nature. To him and several thinkers after him, religion, social reforms and politics were so intermixed that philosophy received little attention. The most important issue for Ram Mohan was that of identity. Society in Calcutta, as well as throughout the country, was ascriptive. Birth determined one's religion as well as one's ritual status; no individual; or group could change caste or ritual status. And change of religion invited censure.

Caste identity was indeed difficult to obliterate. However, before his departure for England, Ram Mohan made sure that the trust deed of the first Brahmo temple-executed on January 23, 1830-defined it as "a place of public meeting of all people without distinction"...

Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar was the most outspokenly forthright of all in the rejection of Indian schools of thought, highlighted by his 1835 letter to the Board of Education on the subject of teachings at Sanskrit College. He maintained that truth had two heads—one according to the 'Empiricists' (such as Locke and Hume), and the other in consonance with Vedanta, Sankhya and Nyaya. In the same letter, he rejected the proposal to teach his pupils Berkeley's Idealism. Vidyasagar was different from most Indian thinkers. After the 1867 famine, he disputed the contention that God was compassionate; for He could not otherwise let so many men, women and children die because of the failure of the monsoon, no fault of theirs. Normally, Vidyasagar did not bother himself with divinity, and the provocation for this utterance has not been traced.

Rarely did he quote the scriptures and the shashtras, except when he chanced upon one in support of the reforms he advocated.

For 40 years (1840 to 1880), Debendranath Tagore led that section of the elite which immersed themselves with beliefs and ideas. He had reacted sharply to the prevalent Christian proselytisation, and revived the Brahmo movement which had lost its vigour after Ram Mohan's death. He allowed caste distinctions to continue, even though he may not have approved of them personally. Debendranath was a Vedantist who put his trust in the Upanishad which Ram Mohan had recommended to

The Industrial Revolution touched Calcutta around the 1850s and accelerated the influx of people from other towns and villages. The city had been receiving people since 1710, but at a rate which permitted the absorption in line with the prevailing customs. Acceleration made the immigrant a factor in the city's life. The immigrant shed caste habits and prejudices, but in turn moderated the townsmen's departures from orthodoxy.

At the same time, modernisation tended to reduce the hold that religion exerted on the citizen. Scientific investigations and political activities had begun. In a sense, scientific explorations had begun in 1784 with the founding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, followed by the laying of the Botanical Garden in 1787, the institution of the Botanical Survey in 1797, the Geological Survey in 1846, and the establishment of the Museum in 1814. These institutions served the European residents only. A few Indians, mostly Sanskrit scholars, were associated with the researches of the Asiatic Society. They helped Europe's discovery of India and Europe's Oriental Renaissance. The feedback from these developments started reaching Calcutta from 1860 onwards, and strengthened religious revivalism and nationalism.

One aspect of this feedback from Europe was the interest by German Idealists (Kant and his successors) in India's 'speculative' philosophy. That fueled a revived interest in the Upanishads and Vedas. And Vivekananda's enthusiastic listeners abroad led to further acclaim at home.

Interest in 'Positivism' may be ascribed to three unrelated motivations. One, it was more recent than 'Empiricism', and could be attractive on that account to those aspiring for distinction in a colonial city. Two, nascent nationalists would turn to any source other than the English for inspiration. Positivism had originated in France, and it is known that one of its pioneers in Calcutta took pride in having read the original French texts. Lastly, but probably of greatest significance, was the fact that one of its British propagators declared that it was "capable of giving a reason for respecting Hindu social institutions", including the caste system.

Brahmos and Derozians, influenced by 'Empiricism', were critical of Hindu social systems, especially the caste system. Positivism set out to be respectful to the caste system, and this

observation, it launched vidyasagar on the social service that Hinduism had not known before. Hinduism lacked organization for succour to the sick, bereaved, destitute or struck by natural calamity, or to impart education to the young. Little can be done by an individual in a situation created by a famine, but there is considerable scope for charity or social service in everyday life. Charity was quite absent in Hindu life. The unfortunate and the poor were despised as paying for their sins in a previous birth—a corollary to the belief in the transmigration of soul.

Opinions differ whether or not Vivekananda found evidence of a compassionate God, but he did furnish Hinduism with an organization similar to what the Christians had. It was and is named the 'Ramakrishna Mission', named and organized on the model of its Christian counterparts.

It had a predecessor. In 1843 three Derozians-Kisorichand Mitra, Ramgopal Ghosh and Pearychand Mitra—combined with the atheist Akshaykumar Datta to form the Hindu Philanthropic Society. In spite of the support of a rich man like Ramgopal Ghosh, the Society foundered. Traditionally, charity was meant exclusively for the Brahmins...

More schools of thought competed for adherents in the city in the second half of the 19th century than the first. From 1850 the conservative leadership devolved on Debendranath Tagore. Technically, he was a Brahmo, but of that section which would not break with Hindu caste rules.

However, not all the softening of attitudes was on the Brahmo side. Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-1886), the outstanding Hindu pietist who had come to Calcutta in 1855, humble as he was, called on Debendranath Tagore and Keshubchandra Sen, even on Vidyasagar. The visit to Vidyasagar ended with civilities and nothing else, though Vidyasagar, when told by Ramakrishna that he had come to the "sea" (sagar), replied: "Since you have come to the sea, take some salt water back with you." Ramakrishna did not stop at visits. He took up an idea underlying all Brahmo thinking from Ram Mohan to Keshubchandra Sen, that of the underlying unity of all religions which could lead to the combining of the good points of all. Ramakrishna experimented with living in succession as a follower of each of the major religions. He

early age. As a youth he travelled widely outside Bengal and mastered several languages--Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and later Hebrew, Greek, and English, in addition to his native Bengali and Hindi.

Roy supported himself by moneylending, managing his small estates, and speculating in British East India Company bonds. In 1805 he was employed by John Digby, a lower company official. Through Digby he was introduced to Western culture and literature. For the next 10 years Roy drifted in and out of British East India Company service as Digby's assistant.

Roy continued his religious studies throughout this period. In 1803 he composed a tract denouncing India's religious divisions and superstition. As a remedy for these ills, he advocated a monotheistic Hinduism in which reason guides the adherent to "... the Absolute Originator who is the first principle of all religions." He sought a philosophical basis for his religious beliefs in the Upanishads and Vedas, translating these ancient Sanskrit treatises into Bengali, Hindi, and English and writing summaries and treatises on them. The central theme of these texts, for Roy, was the worship of the Supreme God, beyond human knowledge, who supports the universe. By translating the sacred Sanskrit Upanishads into modern Bengali, Roy violated a long-standing tradition, but, in appreciation of his translations, the French Societe Asiatique in 1824 elected him to an honorary membership.

In 1815 Roy founded the short-lived Atmiya-Sabha (Friendly Society) to propagate his doctrines of monotheistic Hinduism. He became interested in Christianity and learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the Old and New Testaments. In 1820 he published the ethical teachings of Christ, excerpted from the four Gospels, under the title Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness.

The strengthening of British influence in Bengal with the battle of Plassey in 1757 coincided with significant developments of thought in England (John Locke in the 1680s, Adam Smith with his monumental book in 1776, and Edmund Burke) and in the USA (Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and Alexander Hamilton, among others). The English language came to India in 1603 in Akbar's time but there was then no pressing economic reason for Indian people to learn English. It was only after the consolidation

Nehru, who was very well-educated and fully aware of the history of liberalism, seems to have had surprisingly little faith in an individual's ability to think and take responsibility for himself or herself. Nehru did not emphasise the importance of each individual undertaking self reflection and choosing among ethical alternatives. Possibly, in his view, making these ethical choices was too difficult for the common man. He definitely believed that these choices were best directed through state level dictates laid down by governing elites. Through planning. In any event, he veered toward collectivist and socialist thinking where decision making power is concentrated in the state. Decentralisation, where power and freedom vests with people at the lowest levels, was anathema to Nehru. He stated in his Autobiography: "socialism is... for me not merely an economic doctrine which I favour; it is a vital creed which I hold with all my head and heart." Indian industrialists (with their Bombay Plan) also sided with Nehru on a socialist pattern based on the Russian 5-year plan model.

Despite the environment in which socialist thought was flourishing, India was fortunate to enjoy at least a few liberties even before independence. The advances made in political institutions in England as a result of liberalism were imported and embedded into India over the decades by British rulers. Things like the right of assembly and protest under reasonable circumstances, the right to property, and freedom of expression? with a relatively free press, became a part and parcel of Indian political landscape before independence.

Silver-tongued Men

In these dastardly days of Quota Raj standards are dismissed as elitist, mediocrity is proclaimed from all public platforms as the sacred norm, vulgarity is publicly honoured by all political parties as true authenticity, physical intimidation is substituted for intellectual argument at the highest levels of Governance in New Delhi, and our non-descript Prime Minister finds himself impotent to prevent the continuous debasement of public discourse on all vital national issues of life and death. All the instruments of the STATE-I mean our criminally oriented EXECUTIVE, our debased and debauched JUDICIARY and above all our LEGISLATURE democratically filled with some of the greatest criminals in world

of this unmerited obscurity and, as Hamlet would say, 'to report them aright to the world'. The present work is an attempt in that direction Tandon has gloriously succeeded in his sacred attempt.

Tandon has considered and presented the speeches of 18 eminent predecessors of Mahatma Gandhi. They were all born nearly a generation before his birth in 1869. Historically speaking, they were born between the Battle of Plassey in 1757 and the uprising of 1857. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the first to be included in this survey, was born fifteen years after the Battle of Plassey in 1772. Kasinath Trimbak Telang (1850-1993), the last to be considered among the predecessors of Mahatma Gandhi, was just 7 years old when the uprising of 1857 broke out. Apart from the speeches of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Kasinath Trimbak Telang, the great orations of Dwarakanath Tagore (1794-1846), Ram Gopal Ghose (1815-1808), Michael Madhusudan Dutt (1824-1873), Rajendra Lal Mitra (1824-1891), Dadbhai Naoroji (1825-1917), Kristo Das Pal (1834-1889), Keshub Chunder Sen (1838-1884), Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901), Womesh Chunder Bonnerjee (1844-1906), Budrudin Tyabji (1844-1906), Rash Behari Ghose (1845-1921), Pheroze Shah Mehta (1845-1915), Ananda Mohan Bose (1846-1906), Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925), Romesh Chandra Dutt (1848-1909) and Lal Mohan Ghose (1849-1909) have been brilliantly presented with critical comments, each speaker being placed in his historic time and context.

These 18 great predecessors of Mahatma Gandhi had learnt two lessons from the times in which they lived. The first was the futility of armed revolution. They had known it from the experience of their countrymen that a violent revolution against the British could not succeed. They were all in fact coerced into non-violent resistance.

Later with Gandhi, this technique was perfected based on higher and sounder moral principles. The second lesson was the realisation that the fallen India needed Western rationalistic outlook for her national rejuvenation.

In Tandon's opinion, the appellation of The Best, as far as the style of oratory in concern must go to Michael Madusudan Dutt (1824-1873), whose speeches were pure and powerful literature.

Apart from Mahatma Gandhi, the speeches of all the other well-known freedom fighters like Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920), Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932), Motilal Nehru (1861-1931), Madam Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946), Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928), Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915), Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Shastri (1869-1946), Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das (1870-1925), Sri Aurobindo Ghose (1872-1950), Bhula Bhai Desai (1877-1946), Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949), Chakravarthi Rajagopalachariar (1879-1972), Subash Chandra Bose (1897-1945), Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956), Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1888-1975) and Shyama Prasad Mukherjee (1905-1953) have been presented in an ordered manner making it very easy for easy consultation and reference.

Here are a few flashes from the speeches of these great and forgotten sons of India: The millions of Indians are dumb. But the press gives them a tongue Kristo Das Pal (1838-1884).

Again and again has India asked: 'which way lies salvation? In the dim past, it was the obstinate questioning of the individual soul. In the living present it is the tortured cry of the Soul of India Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das (1870-1925).

'I advise you to be faithful to your party, but always put the nation above it' Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastry (1869-1946).

'I have no doubt that after all the political scoundrels temporarily catapulted to positions of high authority in New Delhi and the States are dead and forgotten,' Tandon's book will continue to be read by coming generations with great interest. What the Government of India and the State Governments have failed to do in the last 59 years after independence, a private publisher in New Delhi called 'Ane Books India' has done it for the lasting benefit of the mute and helpless millions of India who are kept in a state of continued ignorance by our unscrupulous politicians.

To conclude in the beautiful words of Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901): With buoyant hope, with liberated manhood and with a faith that never shirks duty, with a justice that deals fairly to all, with unclouded intellect and with all her powers fully

The Bhagalpur blindings provide an object lesson in the crucial contribution that sustained journalistic research can make in creating public awareness of human rights, more so in a traditional society in which entrenched abuses are apt to be overlooked. The reporter must be able to place the abuse in its wider legal, social and constitutional context to enable the reader to realise its implications. Stories on human rights must touch the conscience of the reader if they are to arouse rethinking of traditional norms. This requires skill in presentation as well. But the impact can be more lasting and more valuable to society than other newspaper events.

In Bhagalpur, many residents protested against the suspension of the policemen, arguing that such punishment deterred crime more effectively than protracted legal cases. It took a sustained campaign on the rights of prisoners, together with the impact of pictures of the blinded men, to touch the public conscience and expose similar brutal practices elsewhere.

In recent years, media has reflected and further strengthened increasing awareness of human rights in many areas in which they were overlooked before. Exploitation and ill-treatment of domestic workers, often children, is still routine in many households. But a series of press reports describing the cruel conditions in which they are often kept has pierced the silence and forced the police to intervene. Special cells have been set up to deal with violence against and ill-treatment of women following sustained exposure of dowry deaths and other crimes.

Bonded labour-workers and children chained to fields or workplace for their lifetimes to repay old debts-is treated as an offence only after the press joined social activists in exposing the evil. Now the police are active, at least in Delhi. On September 10, 2000, it was reported that the "South District (Delhi) police have rescued 19 children from Bihar who were being used as bonded labourers." They were between six and 12 years of age. But investigations into the trauma of the children and the circumstances in which they were bonded in Bihar are missing.

Few countries, if any, have inherited such a wide-ranging legacy of social, cultural, economic and other restrictions on human rights as India. At the same time, India has given itself a

urban reader. One of the biggest contributions of the press in recent years is to make the right to information a national issue. The campaign for right to information began five years ago with villagers of south Rajasthan demanding access to official files containing details of money disbursed for local development works. They knew that much of the money was misappropriated, but could not prove it without access to the files. Though opposed by the local bureaucracy, they were able to establish corruption in some cases. Taken up by the press, especially local newspapers, the campaign spread to many parts of the country. At the time of writing, four states have passed their own right to information legislation and the Central Government has introduced a Bill in Parliament.

That the press has a role in promoting awareness of human rights, then described as social reform, was realised long before Independence. In 1823, the noted Bengali author, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, brought out weeklies in three languages to campaign against caste discrimination and sati and for widow remarriage. Social reformers elsewhere followed his example. Nearly a century later, Mahatma Gandhi, the most outstanding exponent of journalism in the service of human rights, entered the field. He focussed on the evil of untouchability but also campaigned for women's rights, basic education, prisoner's rights (long before Bhagalpur), community health, rural employment and other development objectives later adopted by the United Nations.

In 1933, Gandhi brought out the first issue of Harijan, or God's children, his name for untouchable. It marshalled support, including a contribution from Rabindranath Tagore, for the Temple Entry Bill that sought to give untouchables the right to enter temples, the first step in their liberation. That the Bill was defeated in the Central Assembly and officially described as "a serious invasion of private rights" indicates the temper of the times. Largely due to Gandhi's sustained campaign at public meetings and in print, untouchability was abolished and its practice forbidden in 1950 under Article 17 of the Constitution. But, as recounted vividly by the prizewinning journalist P. Sainath in a series of articles in *The Hindu*, it continues to be practised in many ways. The challenge to eradicate the most deep-rooted denial of human rights in India

Indian nation but to the sympathy and respect of all in England who appreciate useful work.

When the first important public female school worthy the name was established by the late Mr. Bethune in the metropolis of India, during the administration of Lord Dalhousie, it evoked a feeling of discontent, throughout the country, and excited great opposition and bitterness; but in spite of a large number of conservative and orthodox men saying, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther," the advancing waves of progress went on till at last, not only in the large cities and presidency towns, but even in the small provincial towns and villages, small school after school rose up, and, in the course of a few years, not only were there scores, but hundred of little girls coming day after day in order to receive instruction in vernacular literature, in arithmetic and in writing. In carrying out the work of female education great impediments, some of them of an almost insuperable character, had to be overcome, and many defects had to be rectified.

In a country where little girls became mothers when they would hardly be supposed in civilized countries to have attained the marriageable age, and where they became grandmothers when perhaps they ought to think of marrying; girls could receive education only for three or four years at most in a public school, their education stopping at a time when they ought to begin. This custom of premature marriage was pernicious, not only physically, but intellectually and morally considered; for the work of education was arrested when little girls, having become mothers, began to talk with ridiculous gravity of the duties they owed to their children. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary to supplement this deficient system of education of native girls with zenana instruction.

As soon as that want was felt, many kind-hearted ladies, both in India and in England, took the matter with an amount of earnestness which was very creditable to them. They combined in order to get funds, and sent out trained governesses to visit native ladies in their own houses. Zenana instruction was indispensably necessary for the real welfare of the country. So long as the system of seclusion prevailed, which would prevail

charming verses on the beauties and sublimities of creation. A periodical is also published in Bengal, to which Bengali ladies send very often sent most charming contributions, mostly verses, which native ladies take great delight in composing. Some of the best theistic hymns are from the pen of Brahmo ladies. This shows that native ladies are not slow to learn.

The Government having come forward with a liberal grant, it is the duty of the natives of India to cooperate with the Government in a friendly and harmonious manner, in order to give effect to the noble scheme which Miss Carpenter had suggested, and which, through the instrumentality of Government has been realized in at least one of the presidency towns. If full effect can be given to this project, if a sufficient number of schools can be brought into existence, not only in the presidency towns, but in the chief provincial cities in the North-West, and in the Punjab, India would be supplied with that which it most wants at the present time.

I hope and trust that the English ladies who are present, would well weigh all that has been said by Miss Carpenter, and that they will be stimulated by her example. I fully agree with Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji that we must not too sanguinely look forward to actual and viable and tangible results, but we must look beneath the surface, in order to see whether or not Miss Carpenter's visit to India has produced a lasting impression on the native public mind, and on the minds of all those who were really interested in the work of female education in India.

(Source: The speech and other details were published with the title *Female Education in India in The Brahmo Samaj*: Keshub Chunder Sen in England by Brahmo Tract Society, 78 Upper Circular Road, Kolkata in 1915.)

The Vedas can be read at many levels, it is said. Those who have heard the chanting of the Vedas by trained priests will be overwhelmed by the sounds that transport one to a different world. You may not know enough Sanskrit to understand a word but the combination of sounds will make your body a tuning fork resonating to some cosmic sounds. You can read some good translations and find in the Vedas an uplifting philosophy and a beautiful metaphysic. If you have been to a traditional wedding

has won, and the experimental physicists and their fellow travellers have been constructing more billion dollar accelerators and cyclotrons, and chortling over the pictures that the Hubble telescope is beaming back to Earth.

Most of us, if not all, in the Krishnamurti schools were more knowledgeable about the books being written by Westerners than of any attempts by Indians at reconciling the findings of modern scientists with the knowledge/information contained in the Vedas. Very few of us were interested in or knew Sanskrit. The physicists and aeronautical engineers amongst us knew their science and technology but cared little to read the Vedas or other Hindu texts. The philosophers amongst us knew little Sanskrit, and less physics. Our knowledge of Hinduism was “second hand”. In short, there wasn’t a Dr. Roy amongst us. A research scientist at the University of Toronto, Roy, a native of Bihar, did his undergraduate work in metallurgical engineering at IIT, Kanpur, and got his M.S. and Ph.D. from Ohio State University in Materials Science and Engineering. That is his engineering and science background. As he says in the preface to his book, he has combined his early learning and training in Sanskrit with his scientific and engineering vocation.

Most of us who are trained as scientists, or social scientists, or who have grown up in modern, technological societies are skeptics when it comes to accepting the “scientific” worth of ancient texts. There are also too many charlatans and too many “men of faith” who are willing to take people for a ride as long as they can sell their religion. Given the trend in modern Indian education too, there are few of us who are willing to spend time digging into the texts of the past. Moreover, Indian texts were considered to be mostly spiritual-religious texts. The latest and most lucrative path is to “deconstruct” the texts through literary, political, philosophical, and psychological analyses. Thus it was that at the last South Asia Conference in Madison in October 1998, there were Sanskritists who “deconstructed” aspects of the Ramayana: one professor, wearing a ring in his left ear, speculated that when Hanuman “grew large” and lifted a mountain and transported it across the sea, it was merely a metaphor for Hanuman getting an erection after watching the many semi-clad

Pirusa-animal mean" How can the God himself be sacrificed? The sacrifice here means a change of form, a change from unmanifested form to a form of manifested universe.... As the Pirusa ceased to be what the Pirusa was before the creation, he was symbolically sacrificed. This had nothing to do with human sacrifice" (p. 37-38). Skeptical readers may say, "oh, it is just a little twist to the original formulation". But let us look at just one or two more verses, and see if we the "ordinary" or "literal" meaning makes sense. If it does not, then we need to try and figure out the symbolism. 10.90.01 is translated by O'Flaherty thus: "The Man has a thousand heads, a thousand eyes, a thousand feet. He pervaded the earth on all sides and extended beyond it as far as ten fingers". A thousand feet and a thousand eyes, we could say, is just a poetic metaphor for "God" who is "everywhere" and "sees everything". But what about the ten fingers? A thousand eyes and now "his" reach only as far as ten fingers? Roy says the ten fingers represent "ten dimensions".

In modern physics direction and dimension are synonymous. Thus, he claims, that in Vedic cosmology universe is seen as ten-dimensional. He quotes the Vayu Purana (4.74-75) in which it is said that the "whole universe including moon, sun, galaxies and planets was inside the egg and the egg was surrounded by ten qualities from outside". Roy provides a more careful context for the reader to speculate about the nature of the universe. There are numerous verses from the different hymns of the "ten books" of the Rig Veda that Roy translates, and provides a "context" which makes better sense than the merely poetic. A careful reader would therefore have the opportunity to compare both Roy's translation of the relevant verse and the analysis of the same.

The next important point that the author makes is that since the Rig Veda is a book of cosmology whatever "history" there is in it is not "real history". Similarly, he says that whatever else is there in it is merely tangential. For the establishment historians and other nay-sayers therefore this is a book that will befuddle and confuse. It is also a book that will undermine their claims about the Aryan invasion of India, for Roy musters some fascinating evidence (see p. 110 and p. 123) to support a fresh interpretation of the Harappan civilization.

independent of the other and there is no limitation on how many cycles there can be. Roy supports all his claims by providing the specific location of the verse in the scriptures. The verses have been translated into English, and the scientific meaning of the verse is explained by dissecting the words and providing other supporting evidence from elsewhere in the Vedas.

The work of Roy is important in that he tries to figure out the hidden meanings in the Rig Veda by drawing careful analogies and comparisons, and telling us when he is not sure of a particular meaning of a particular word or hymn. Thus the contracting universe is “Martanda”, the living universe Vivasvana, the first pair of particle and anti-particle (matter and anti-matter) are “Yama” and “Manu”, the early part of the universe when the surface tension was the most important force constraining the expansion of the universe the battle between these two forces is the immortalized epic battle of Indra and Vrtra. Radiation is Rudra, and the remnants of radiation from the early universe, the cosmic background radiation, is Visha. Brihaspati represents the expansion of the universe, gramya (the domesticated animal) is boson, aranya (wild animal) is fermion, and so on. All of Roy’s claims are buttressed by relevant hymns, and he also provides interesting asides on how the myths and fables of other cultures and religions were borrowed from the latter Brahmanas and thus were misreadings and wrong or partial interpretations of Vedic knowledge.

At this point, skeptics may wonder how the Vedic sages knew what they knew. Roy claims that they arrived at their findings and conclusions based on sound reasoning. This may seem like the Vedic sages were the precursors of Descartes! I do wish that he had speculated more deeply on how these ancient people discovered these fascinating truths. What was the Vedic methodology? Was the nature of the universe “revealed” or was it discovered? Readers may think this is a weakness of the book but he, however, makes it plain that modern scientific methods are not the only way one can investigate the “subtle nature of reality” (p. xiii). In his foreword to the book, Dr. Subhash Kak (author/co-author of books on astronomy, mathematics, and computer science, and a leading figure in the re-interpretation of

World: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Hindus form the majority, (82%) in India. Buddhism, that originated in India and flourished till the 6th century A.D., was practically made to quit India and it spread to several countries in Asia, making itself a majority religion in Asian countries. Today Buddhists form only 0.5% in India. Besides Muslims form 12% in the Indian population. In spite of a long history of Christianity, Christians form today only 2.5% of the total population and the Catholics only 1.5% of the total population of India. In spite of this significantly tiny minority character, the Catholic Church in India made praiseworthy contributions in the life and development of Indians.

The aim of this paper is to explore a few areas wherein Catholic Church made significant contributions. Space and time does not allow one to bring out every detail. The main contours will be pointed out in a sociological and Socio-Pastoral perspective in the field of education, health care, Social development, Hindu religious revival movements, contribution to the secular polity of the country, offering of its personnel to the service of the people, and the field of the empowerment of women.

Though Christians and particularly Catholics are a tiny minority, the contribution in the field of education is not only impressive but shows the importance the Church has given to it in the Indian context. At the time of independence of India in 1947 only about 14% of the population were literate. If it has gone up to 55% of the population today, Christianity can be proud in playing its role in it. Some statistics will testify to it.

"The Catholic Church in India runs over 17,000 educational institutions, while over 11,000 are Nursery, Primary and Middle schools. There are also over 1500 professional and technical schools. In the year 2000, Catholic colleges numbered 175 including 2 Engineering and 2 Medical Colleges. What is impressive is that 70% of all these schools are in rural areas, serving the poor, especially the *dalits*, the *adivasis* and other disadvantaged groups. Only a meager 15% of the Church institutions are in the cities and large towns."

"At the close of the 19th century, India had only 26 Christian Colleges. At the time of independence in 1947, the number of Christian Colleges was 62 out of a total of 450. In 2000 Christian

and downtrodden was given due importance right from the beginning. In certain areas like the tribal belt the liberation of the tribals from money-lenders and landlords served as the first contribution of the Church. E.g Fr.S.Lievens, Fr.J.B.Hoffmann, etc.

Today the Catholic Church allocates much of its finance in this field *e.g.* for tsunami relief and rehabilitation work it spent 150 million dollars through Caritas India. There are Diocesan Social Service Societies in all the 160 dioceses in India. There is the national organization of Caritas India and Catholic Relief Services and several Regional Societies like Don Bosco Reach Out in the North-East India. The Church changed and evolved in her services from relief and charitable works to Institutional model of educational and health Institutions and from there has adopted the empowerment approach of making the poor self-reliant, able to remake their future by a cooperative and collective action for social transformation.

The grassroots organizations of the poor and the downtrodden in villages are organized by the Church by giving them awareness education and motivation to act collectively. There are today thousands of such groups all over India which attempt to change their lives and build their future through savings, income-generation projects and collective actions to liberate themselves from oppressive forces.

Such actions have earned the anger of the rich and vested interested groups who today plan through fundamentalist groups to attack and eliminate the presence of Christians. You must have heard about the atrocities taking place in Orissa where no help is given to those victims of such attack.

Hindu Religious Revival Movements

In the pre-independence period some religious revival movements emerged. These religions movements were an outcome of the interplay of Socio-economic, political and cultural forces effecting a cultural transaction between Hinduism and Christian models of thought in a society in transition to answer to the existential needs of the people.

Brahmo Samaj (1823) was founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He assimilated several elements from the Western and Christian

His disciple Swami Vivekananda founded Ramakrishna Mission on Christmas eve in 1897. Today it adopts several charitable and social works done by Hindus in several areas.

Contribution to the Secular Polity of the Country

"The Christian community has made a significant contribution when in the constituent Assembly, the Christian community through Fr. Jerome D'Souza renounced separate electorate and expressed trust in the majority community to respect and treat the minority community on a par with all as citizens of the country. That was an important contribution of the Christian community to the secular nature of the Constitution of the Republic. For nation building the secular character and ethos of our polity is essential to shape and forge harmony and peace for all people of the country. The Church remains committed to secularity of the Constitution of the Republic. Secular character of the Republic is a positive force for peace and communal harmony in a multicultural and multireligious society that India is."

The Religious Personnel

The Religious personnel working in different fields of Socio-Pastoral involvement is another contribution to the total services offered to build up India.

Of these majority of Religious Sisters and Brothers serve in educational and healthcare institutions. A good number of priests also serve in such institutions and social service societies in the 160 dioceses in India. Practically all of them are professionally qualified and give a professional contribution in the building up of the nation.

Towards the Empowerment of Women

The development of women in different aspects is another specific contribution to the backbone of Indian development. It starts from working for the abolition of girl child feticide in the womb or outside by upholding the ethical values and supporting women to fight against such evil by giving protection to such women and the child they beget. It continues by the education of the girl children through the schools and through the awareness given to women's grassroots groups to educate their girl children.

MOHAN ROY AND INDIAN WRITING IN ENGLISH

Though foreign in its origin, English has been adopted in India as a language of education and literary expression besides being an important medium of communication amongst the people of various regions. The beginning of Indian literature in English is traced to the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, by which time English education was more or less firmly established in the three major centres of British power in India—Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Ram Mohan Roy (1774-1833), a social reformist from Bengal who fought for widow remarriage and voting rights for women, was the pioneer of Indian writing in English. Roy insisted that for India to be included among the world's nations, education in English was essential. He, therefore, campaigned for introduction of scientific education in India through the English medium.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was followed in the early 19th century in Bengal by the poets Henry Derozio and Michael Madhusudan Dutt. Dutt started out writing epic verse in English, but returned to his native Bengali later in life. The poems of Toru Dutt (1855-1876), who died at a tender age of 21, and the novel *Rajamohan's Wife* by Bankimchandra Chatterjee have received academic acceptance as the earliest examples of Indian literature written in English. Toru Dutt not composed poetry in English, but more interestingly, translated French poetry as well. Her best works include *Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan*. However, the most famous literary figure of this era was Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 for

Indian Novel), Amitav Ghosh (Circle of Reason, Shadow Lines), Upamanyu Chatterjee (English August, The Mammaries of the Welfare State), Raj Kamal Jha (The Blue Bedspread), Amit Chaudhuri (A New World), Pankaj Mishra (Butter Chicken in Ludhiana, The Romantics) and Vikram Chandra (Red Earth and Pouring Rain, Love and Longing in Bombay). The latest Indian writer who took the world with a storm was Arundhati Roy, whose *The God of Small Things* won the 1997 Booker Prize and became an international best-seller. Rohinton Mistry, Firdaus Kanga, Kiran Desai (Strange Happenings in the Guava Orchard), Sudhir Kakar (The Ascetic of Desire), Ardeshtir Vakil (Beach Boy) and Jhumpa Lahiri (Interpreter of Maladies) are some other renowned writers of Indian origin.

Former Prime Minister P.V.Narasimha Rao's *The Insider*; Satish Gujral's *A Brush with Life*; R.K.Laxman's *The Tunnel of Time*, Prof. Bipin Chandra's *India After Independence*, Sunil Khilnani's *The Idea of India*, J.N.Dixit's *Fifty Years of India's Foreign Policy*, Yogesh Chadha's *Rediscovering Gandhi* and Pavan K.Varma's *The Great Indian Middle Class* are notable works of the recent times.

The mid-20th century saw the emergence of poets such as Nissim Ezekiel (*The Unfurnished Man*), P Lal, A K Ramanujan (*The Striders, Relations, Second Sight, Selected Poems*), Dom Moraes (*A Beginning*), Keki Daruwalla, Geive Patel, Eunice de Souza, Adil Jussawala, Kamala Das, Arun Kolatkar and R. Parthasarathy, who were heavily influenced by literary movements taking place in the West such as Symbolism, Surrealism, Existentialism, Absurdism and Confessional Poetry. These authors used Indian phrases alongside English words and tried to reflect a blend of the Indian and the Western cultures.

Ram Mohan Roy, Translation of an abridgment of the Vedant, or Resolution of all the Veds; the most celebrated and revered work of Brahminical theology; establishing the unity of the Supreme Being; and that He alone is the object of propitiation and worship.

Calcutta, No printer, 1816. Contemporary blindstamped red goatskin (spine darkened and minor chipping). BOUND WITH

Upanishads and Vedas, translating these ancient Sanskrit treatises into Bengali, Hindi, and English and writing summaries and treatises on them. The central theme of these texts, for Roy, was the worship of the Supreme God, beyond human knowledge, who supports the universe. By translating the sacred Sanskrit Upanishads into modern Bengali, Roy violated a long-standing tradition, but, in appreciation of his translations, the French Societe Asiatique in 1824 elected him to an honorary membership. "In 1815 Roy founded the short-lived Atmiya-Sabha (Friendly Society) to propagate his doctrines of monotheistic Hinduism. He became interested in Christianity and learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the Old and New Testaments. In 1820 he published the ethical teachings of Christ, excerpted from the four Gospels, under the title Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness.

"In his newspapers, treatises, and books, Roy tirelessly criticized what he saw as the idolatry and superstition of traditional Hinduism. He denounced the caste system and attacked the custom of suttee (ritual burning of widows upon the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands). Roy's actual influence on the British East India Governing Council's prohibition of suttee in 1829 is not clear, but it has been widely accepted that he had the effect of emboldening the government to act decisively on the matter. "Roy's importance in modern Indian history rests partly upon the broad scope of his social vision and the striking modernity of his thought. He was a tireless social reformer, yet he also revived interest in the ethical principles of the Vedanta school as a counterpoise to the Western assault on Indian culture. In his textbooks and treatises he contributed to the popularization of the Bengali language, while at the same time he was the first Indian to apply to the Indian environment the fundamental social and political ideas of the French and American revolutions."

William Adam

William Adam (November 1, 1796-February 19, 1881), born in Dunfermline, Fife, Scotland, began his ministry as a Baptist missionary in India. His labours in India made him into a linguist, a biblical scholar, and a Unitarian. Thereafter for years, Adam tried to elicit support for his work as a Unitarian missionary, first

With help from the Dixwell family, New England merchants in the India trade, Adam's wife and family left India to go to the United States. Adam followed four years later, in 1838. Travelling from Boston, he attended in London the first meeting of the British India Society, an anti-slavery organization. Members of the Society introduced Adam to leading Garrisonian abolitionists from the United States. When he returned to Boston he took up the position of professor of Oriental Literature at Harvard, which he had been offered before his trip. Adam found Harvard's academic atmosphere did not suit him, however, and he resigned after just one year.

Finding himself consumed by the anti-slavery cause, he returned to London for the World Anti-Slavery Convention in June, 1840. He vigorously protested the exclusion of women from the meetings. Afterward, remaining in London, he began working as editor of the *British Indian Advocate*, the journal of the British India Society, then called for his family to join him.

Eighteen months later the Adam family once again journeyed to America to join a new utopian community in Massachusetts, the Northampton Association of Education and Industry. Adam became the Association's secretary and director of education. He also invested money in the project, but after control of the capital was taken away from investors, he resigned. For a while the Adam family lived in the town of Northampton. William sought work as a lecturer and conducted classes for Boston women during the winter of 1844-5.

He met Charles Briggs, Secretary of the American Unitarian Association, who told him Unitarian ministers were desperately needed in the "west," which at that time meant west of the Appalachian Mountains. On his way to Illinois, Adam stopped in Syracuse, New York where the Rev. Samuel J. May, also an active Garrisonian, was minister of the Unitarian Church. May told Adam of a new opening for a Unitarian minister in Toronto on the British side of Lake Ontario. After hearing Adam preach, on two Sundays and one mid-week evening in early July, 1845, Toronto Unitarians called him as their first minister.

But the match between minister and congregation was not a good one. After some early success-the securing of a church

a whole. At the time Adam regretted that Ram Mohan Roy and his Hindu friends chose a Unitarian Hindu faith in preference to Unitarian Christianity. Yet without Adam's dedicated initiative and drive, the reformed Unitarian Hindu movement, the Brahmo Somaj, might never have come into being. The distinguished leaders of the Brahmo Somaj nurtured and propagated what became, in effect, a 'school of thought', which flowered into the famous Bengal Renaissance, a great burst of modern, yet distinctively Indian political theory, idealism and poetry. The Brahmo Somaj, first established in part by an ill-supported and mostly forgotten Unitarian missionary, influenced immensely the intellectual and political culture of all India.

There are letters from and referring to Adam in the Baptist Missionary Society Library at Didcot, Oxfordshire; in the Houghton Library at Harvard, Cambridge, Massachusetts, and in the anti-slavery collections in the Boston Public Library. The minute book of the Calcutta Unitarian Committee is at Unitarian Headquarters, Essex Hall, London. There are 50 manuscript sermons from the Toronto and Chicago period at Dr. Williams's Library, London. Correspondence regarding Adam's appointment at Harvard is in the Harvard University Archives. The minutes of The Society for the Promotion of Christianity in India and the record of the 1860 conversation between Charles Dall and William Adam are in the Andover Harvard Theological Library. The Dixwell family papers, with their many references to Adam and his family, and the archives of the Northampton Association are at The Massachusetts Historical Society in Boston.

The recent discovery of the Calcutta Unitarian Society minute book gives primary documentary support for the reports published in the Unitarian periodical press in both Britain and America. Letters from, to, and referring to Adam and members of his family appear in Clare Taylor, *British and American Abolitionists: an episode in transatlantic understanding* (1974); Walter M. Merrill, *Collected letters of William Lloyd Garrison* (1971); Sophia Dobson Collet, *The life and letters of Raja Rammoun Roy*, 3rd ed. (1962); and Dilip Kumar Biswas, *The Correspondence of Raja Ram Mohan Roy* (1997). There are several biographical articles on Adam: S. C. Sanial "the Rev. William Adam", *Bengal Past and Present* (1914);

how he fought against the practice of sati and undertook a trip to England in 1831 to ensure that Lord Bentick's law abolishing the burning of widows was not reversed by the Hindu men who had hired an English lawyer for that purpose-is almost completely unknown to most Indians in Britain and perhaps a significant section of the diaspora.

The man considered to be "the Father of the Bengal Renaissance" was born, not in 1774, as the inscription on his tomb says, but on May 22, 1772, in Radhanagore, Bengal, the author Krishna Dutta, who was present yesterday, pointed out.

"He was also not a Bahadur (as the inscription also claims)," she said:

In 1833, during his visit to England, Ram Mohan Roy accepted an invitation from Lant Carpenter, a sympathetic minister in the Unitarian Church, to stay at his home, Beech House, Stapleton Grove, in Bristol. But the Raja contracted meningitis and died 10 days after arriving on September 27, 1833.

He was initially buried in the grounds of Beech House in accordance with his own wishes but his remains were reinterred a decade later in Arnos Vale cemetery where the tomb was funded by his friend and a co-founder of the Brahmo Samaj, Dwarkanath Tagore.

Yesterday, Poddar handed over his cheque to a local amateur historian, Carla Contractor-she is married to a Parsi, Phiroze Contractor-who has long campaigned for the restoration of some of the tombs in Arnos Vale, including notably that of Ram Mohan Roy. "I had been trying in vain for a long time but out of the blue, the mayor of Calcutta arrived and offered to find the money to restore the tomb because the Raja is such an important hero in West Bengal," commented Carla, who is a member of the Raja Ram Mohan Roy Trust given responsibility for the restoration work by the Indian high commission in London.

Carla also accepted a £500 cheque from the Brahmo Sammilan Samaj in Calcutta handed over by Rita Bhimani, who had come accompanied by her cricket writer husband, Kishore Bhimani.

The tomb, began Carla, "needs a lot of restoration. The foundations are sinking, the pillars have got cracks down them

the best possible standards and does justice to the monument of such an important man."

He, too, Confirmed: "It is vulnerable, in need of repair and restoration. It is partly the age and vulnerability of the materials that were used originally. This is a very, very important step in conserving a very important monument in England."

He also Said: "It is particularly appropriate to do this in the 60th year of Indian independence. Britain and India have enjoyed a special relationship for 300 years and it is very important that we continue to celebrate this and develop that relationship with tangible projects like the restoration of this monument."

Yesterday, the sun glittered on the gold chains of office worn by The Rt Hon. The Lord Mayor of the City and the County of Bristol, Royston Alan Griffey.

He disclosed that the previous private owner had wanted to sell the cemetery to private developers who had intended either to bulldoze or relocate the memorials and use the land to build residential property.

Griffey Said: "This cemetery was in private ownership and the last 20 years or so it was in terrible condition. The previous private owner was not looking after it so the city (council) had to start compulsory purchase proceedings. That took quite a long time to do)."

He Went On: "That was successful and the compulsory purchase order has fairly recently been confirmed. The ownership was transferred (for a nominal £1) from a private company to Bristol City Council who then, in turn, transferred it to some trustees to look after the restoration of this beautiful cemetery, including the Raja's tomb."

He Insisted: "Without the city taking back the cemetery I am afraid it would have been in a very, very badly neglected state and it would have eventually deteriorated and a lot of the monuments, including this tomb, would have collapsed." He also believed the Raja's message had contemporary relevance. "I certainly do-the Raja has the benefit of not one but two statues in Bristol. There is one outside the Bristol Council offices, a full-length statue, very imposing in robes, but inside the Council

cultural revival-the dimensions of Indian philosophic prose in English spread over areas as diverse and extensive as politics, religion, sociology, economics, ethics, culture, spirituality and so on, thus putting an end to narrow, authoritarian, critical tenets prescribed for the study of philosophy. Also, here the foregrounding of English as a language of discourse where the original Sanskrit is no longer privileged offers an important shift in the politics of Indian thought.

The continuing tension between Western responses and indigenous interpretations, the conceptual frames formulated to accommodate Western assumptions in order to invest Indian thought with a sense of universal acceptability, the impact of Indian philosophic and religious texts on the Western consciousness, and their global dissemination due to the use of English have considerably altered the philosophic and religious maps of the world.

Considering this, it is interesting to approach the issue in question from the perspective of New Historicism. In his seminal work *The New Historicism Reader* (published in 1994 by Routledge) Aram Veesser gives the five fundamental assumptions of New Historicism thus: 1) every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices; 2) every act of unmasking, critique and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risks falling prey to the practice it exposes; 3) literary and non-literary 'texts' circulate inseparably; 4) no discourse, imaginative or archival, gives access to unchanging truths or express unalterable human nature; and 5) a critical method and a language adequate to describe culture under capitalism together participate in the economy they describe.

The present paper attempts a survey of the New Historicist perspective of Indian philosophic prose in English based on these assumptions.

Embedded Texts: Written and Non-Written

The expressive acts of Indian philosophy from its earliest oral tradition-the Vedas, Vedanta, Puranas, Itihasas, Yoga, Mimamsa, bhakti poetry and music-have been influenced by and in their turn have also influenced the dominant material practices of their respective ages. Coming to the origin and development of Indian

terminology and lexicographic problems which received much attention from thinkers such as Bankim Chandra Chatterjee. The Sanskrit exclusivism and the vernacular popularized by the Pali canon brought out ideas such as Buddhism being the fulfilment of Hinduism and the approach to ancient systems through the concept of practical Vedanta. Similarly the support of Hindu orthodoxy by people like Madan Mohan Malaviya resulted in the uplift of untouchables, who were then designated as 'harijans', the people of God.

Fluidity of Discursive Truth

Philosophy was no longer merely metaphysical speculation aimed at bringing out the intellectual brilliance of thinkers; instead it gained ethical and social currency. It acquired an imaginative and symbolic dimension, became more descriptive and contemplative. For instance, the literary masterpieces of Bankim Chandra underlined the philosophic ideal of anushilana (repeated practice); Rabindranath Tagore, in his turn, advocated a personalistic absolutism and considered beauty and harmony of God's creative act as a fitting subject for both literature and philosophy.

The source of inspiration in the case of Devendranath Tagore was his own heart, in contradistinction to the privilege given to revelatory scriptures by other Brahmos. Here the fourth of Veeder's assumptions comes into play because both imaginative and archival discourse shows the alterable nature of truth. Keshab Chandra Sen borrowed from Christianity, while Vivekananda categorized the West as materialistic/pragmatic and the East as spiritual/impractical. Aurobindo attempted to establish the identity of Hinduism not by return to the past nor by asserting its timeless validity; for him it was the source of vitality and change, openness for question and experiment. Coomaraswamy spoke in defence of tradition in Hinduism through his criticism of Radhakrishnan, who, he felt, had failed in the task of actualizing and modernizing the tradition, as had several others. Krishnamurti did not show allegiance to any particular philosophic system or tradition and spoke of spiritual truths as lying deep within oneself, to be realized by one's own effort.

non-idealistic systems of thought. In all of these, the attempt is to make philosophy acquire a saleable value and the oft-repeated attempt to justify it in scientific terms of reference is just one more attempt in this direction.

Finally, it is significant that the terms *darshana* and *tattvajnana*, which are often used synonymously for philosophy in India, are pointers to the fact that philosophy has always been a mode of living, viewed as a perception that gives life its balance. Since philosophy is only one of the modes of presenting Indian thought to the world, it has to be seen in conjunction with literature, art and other areas of intellectual endeavour. As the New Historicist contention underlines, literary and non-literary texts circulate inseparably and therefore a complete picture is one which keeps all modes of presentation in view before any conclusive documentation is given shape.

house of Feringhee Kamal Bose. This day is celebrated by Brahmos as Bhadratsab. This Sabha was convened at Calcutta by religious reformer Raja Ram Mohan Roy for his family and friends settled there. The Sabha regularly gathered on Saturday between seven o'clock to nine o'clock. These were essentially informal meetings of Bengali Brahmins (the "twice born"), accompanied by Upanishadic recitations in Sanskrit followed by Bengali translations of the Sanskrit recitation and singing of Brahmo hymns composed by Ram Mohan. These meetings were open to all Brahmins and there was no formal organisation or theology as such.

On 8 January 1830 influential progressive members of the closely related Kulin Brahmin clan (scurrilously described as Pirali Brahmin *i.e.* ostracised for service in the Mughal Nizaamat of Bengal) of Tagore (Thakur) and Roy (Vandopadhyaya) zumeendar family mutually executed the Trust deed of Brahmo Sabha for the first Adi Brahmo Samaj (place of worship) on Chitpore Road (now Rabindra Sarani), Kolkata, India with Ram Chandra Vidyabagish as first resident superintendent.

On 23 January 1830 or 11th Magh, the Adi Brahmo premises were publicly inaugurated (with about 500 Brahmins and 1 Englishman present). This day is celebrated by Brahmos as Maghotsab.

In November 1830 Ram Mohan Roy left for England.

Decline of Brahmo Sabha

With Ram Mohan's departure for England in 1830, the affairs of Sabha were effectively managed by Trustees Dwarkanath Tagore and Pandit Ram Chandra Vidyabagish, with Dwarkanath instructing his diwan to manage affairs. Weekly service were held consonant with the Trust directive, consisting of three successive parts: recitation of the Vedas by Telegu Brahmins in the closed apartment exclusively before the Brahmin members of the congregation, reading and exposition of the Upanishads for the general audience, and singing of religious hymns.

The reading of the Vedas was done exclusively before the Brahmin participants as the orthodox Telegu Brahmin community and its members could not be persuaded to recite the Vedas before Brahmins and non-Brahmins alike.

Social & Religious Reform

In all fields of social reform, including abolition of the caste system and of the dowry system, emancipation of women, and improving the educational system, the Brahmo Samaj reflected the ideologies of the Bengal Renaissance. Brahmoism, as a means of discussing the dowry system, was a central theme of Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's noted 1914 Bengali language novella, *Parineeta*.

Focus of Modern Brahmo Reform:

- Denunciation of polytheism,
- Rejection of the caste system and its abolition,
- Rejection of the dowry system and its abolition,
- Emancipation of women,
- Widow remarriage,
- Reform of educational system,
- Opposition to sati (the practice of burning widows alive),
- Spread of knowledge by universal access to information,
- Legal reform especially in fields of personal and secular law,
- Simplicity and purity in public and private affairs
- Opposing corrupting influences like intoxicants, television, devadasi system, politicians etc.

After controversies, including the controversy over Keshub Chunder Sen's daughter's child marriage rituals wherein the validity of Brahmo marriages were questioned, the Brahmo Samaj Marriage Bill of 1871 was enacted as the Special Marriages Act of 1872 and set the age at which girls could be married at 14. All Brahmo marriages were thereafter solemnised under this law which required the affirmation "I am not Hindu, nor a Mussalman, nor a Christian". The Special Marriages Act 1872 was repealed by the new Special Marriages Act in 1954 which became the secular Marriage law for India. The old Special Marriages Act of 1872 was allowed to live on as the Hindu Marriage Act 1955 for Hindus-Brahmo Religionists are excluded from this Act; which is applicable, however, to Hindus who follow the Brahmo Samaj. On May 5,

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

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

Roy's understanding of the different religions of the world helped him to compare them with Vedantic philosophy and garner the best from each religion. Sufi mysticism had a great influence on Roy. He loved to repeat three of their maxims: "Man is the slave of benefits"; "The enjoyment of the worlds rests on these two points-kindness to friends and civility to enemies"; and "The way of serving God is to do good to man".

To pursue his interests, Roy resigned from the East India Company a few years later and came to Calcutta in 1814. Dissatisfied with the system of education and the rote method of teaching English, he formed an association of English and Hindu scholars. He also invested his own money in the starting of a school where he introduced subjects like science, mathematics, political science and English. Roy felt that an understanding of these "modern" subjects would give Indians a better standing in the world of the day. Though initially antagonistic towards British rule in India, Roy later began to feel that the country would benefit in terms of education and by exposure to the good points of Christianity. For this he was called a stooge of the British.

Along with a group of like-minded people, Roy founded the Atmiya Sabha in 1814. The group held weekly meetings at his house; texts from the Vedas were recited and theistic hymns were sung. Roy was drawn to the Unitarian form of Christianity that resulted in him supporting a Unitarian Mission to be set up in Calcutta in 1824.

in drafting his famous Minute for the introduction of English education in India. Successive eminent missionary scholars from Scotland, *viz.* Dr. Ogilvie, Dr. Hastie, Dr. Macdonald, Dr. Stephen, Dr. Watt, Dr. Urquhart and others contributed to the spread of the liberal Western education.

Along with other educational institutions like Serampore College, Hindu College, the Scottish Churches College played a pivotal role in ushering the spirit of intellectual enquiry and a general acceptance of the ideals of the European Enlightenment, among Bengalis, in what came to be regarded as the Young Bengal Movement and later, the Bengal Renaissance.

Duff's contemporaries included such luminaries as Reverend Mackay, Reverend Ewart and Reverend Thomas Smith. Till the early 20th century the norm was to bring teachers from Scotland (like William Spence Urquhart, Leslie Stephen, H.M. Percival, Ian Fairweather etc.) but eminent Indian scholars were also engaged as teachers by the college authorities. Scholars like Surendranath Banerjea, Kalicharan Bandyopadhyay, Jnan Chandra Ghosh, Gouri Shankar Dey, Adhar Chandra Mukhopadhyay Sushil Chandra Dutta, Mohimohan Basu, Sudhir Kumar Dasgupta, Nirmal Chandra Bhattacharya, Bholanath Mukhopadhyay and Kalidas Nag had all contributed hugely to enhance the academic standards of the college.

Dr. Duff played a leading part in founding the University of Calcutta in 1857, he was associated with the Agro-horticultural Society and the establishment of a medical college, the first in India. He also aimed at breaking down caste-barriers by founding several girls schools. The Scottish Church College played a pioneering role in women's education as well as co-education in the country. Female students comprise half the present roll strength of the college. With the added interest of the missionaries in educational work and social welfare, the college stands as a monument to Indo-Scottish co-operation. The aims and principles of the College are essentially those of its founder namely, the formation of character through education based on Christian teaching.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) was born into a Brahmin family in Bengal and experienced the orthodox practices of

but Vedic cosmology is quite different from modern theories of the universe. What lends credence to the author's claim is his comprehensive grasp of modern physics. This allows him to construct-possibly reconstruct-a Vedic model of the universe that avoids some of the difficulties of modern theories like the Big Bang.

This may sound similar to some other books on the subject like Fritj of Capra's *Tao of Physics*, but there are important differences. For one, the author's grasp of the Vedic texts is surer, based on primary readings and often, original interpretations. Next, he offers some remarkable insights that go beyond contemporary knowledge of cosmology and even physics. Most significantly, he reconstructs a theory of the universe that may be a serious competitor to modern theories like the Big Bang. In other words, he is not satisfied with a comparison between Vedic knowledge and modern science; his goal is it to shed new light on important problems of nature. His approach is based on a careful reading of Vedic texts combined with a firm grasp of science. And therein lies the book's strength.

Before going into the details of Mr. Roy's book, it is useful to have an idea of different approaches to the study of the Rigveda. The most widely known is the nineteenth century reading favoured mostly-but not exclusively-by Western Indologists, which holds the Rigveda to be the record of 'Aryan invaders' from Eurasia and their conquest of India then populated by dark skinned natives. This has justly fallen into disrepute though some Western academics and their Indian followers continue to cling to some variant of it if only because they have nothing better. It is not hard to see that two dominant nineteenth century European ideas-colonial conquests and racism-went into this interpretation though political and Christian missionary interests also had major influence. The values underlying this version have fallen into disrepute, but their creation called 'Indology' continues to hold sway in academia, though it is rapidly crumbling.

When we turn to Indian interpretations, we run into problems of a different kind-break in tradition. Although we look at the four Vedas as from a single genre, there is considerable difference between the Rigveda and the other three. To take an example, the

as names of gods like 'Marut' and 'Indra' as technical terms used in the natural sciences, and the hymns themselves as descriptions of laws of nature. In other words, the Rigveda contains a description of the forces of nature and the laws that govern them, written in cryptic even coded language. The author's goal is to extract their meaning by making sense of important hymns that appear enigmatic or even incoherent when interpreted in a conventional way. Though his effort cannot be considered complete, it nonetheless sheds new light on important Vedic passages.

For example, in the Vedic literature we have frequent statements like 'agni was pashu' and 'pashus are agneya' that make no sense when read literally. The author, however, identifies 'pashu' with particle and 'agni' with energy. Then a whole series of Vedic passages including the ones just cited become comprehensible and even coherent. Similarly, he identifies Vayu with field-one of the most important concepts in physics. Surya of course stands for light, and the seven horses yoked to Surya's chariot are the seven colours of the light spectrum. The word 'gau' (cow), which Yaska tells us also means light, actually refers to the particle state of light or the photon. Based on his approach, the author suggests that the great Rigvedic hymn 1. 123 by Dirghatamas, actually describes the creation and annihilation of particles, which some liken to Shiva's Dance of Creation. It should be emphasized that this brief description-necessarily simplified-does not do full justice to the author's interpretations.

This approach offers some interesting possibilities. The author observes: "Our universe is matter dominated. If matter and antimatter are created together in same amount, then we should find equal amount of antimatter. Why is it we don't find much evidence of antimatter as far as we can observe? Are remote parts of the universe antimatter dominated? Did matter and antimatter somehow get segregated in different corners of the universe? Scientists don't think so. Scientists believe that when universe was very young, for some reason a small excess of matter over antimatter was generated. As matter and antimatter annihilated each other, this small excess remained, and this small excess is our universe. The Vedas take a different view. According to the Vedas, matter and energy are constantly being created at the

"Universe started with an explosion according to the Big Bang model. At time equal to zero, all the mass-energy was concentrated in a point. This is certainly an unimaginable feat, as the universe is immense.

According to Pauli's exclusion principle, not even two electrons can occupy the same state, and here the whole universe is considered to be inside a point....

The situation is a direct result of the conservation of mass and energy [or mass-energy], the most sacred principle of physics. Considering that the universe is expanding, extrapolating backward in time, the universe was as small as a point. As mass-energy of the universe must be conserved, all the mass-energy must have been there at time zero as well. We should note that conservation of mass-energy is violated in this case as well. This is equivalent to saying that all the mass-energy was created at time zero. Mass-energy density of the universe was infinity at time equal to zero, which is called a point of singularity."

To get around this obvious difficulty, scientists have introduced an entity called 'inflation', which has mysteriously disappeared from the present universe. The singularity problem does not arise in the Vedic approach to creation. As the author observes: "Inflation has not solved the singularity problem, as inflation only produces part of the mass-energy of the universe, and as long as even a tiny amount of matter-energy was present at time zero, singularity problem will be there. The Vedas tell us that at time zero there was no mass-energy in the universe. It was a complete void. Space, mass and energy are continuously being created. As universe had zero mass-energy at time zero, the universe did not start with singularity."

This obviously violates the conservation principle. But Vedic cosmology has a conservation principle of its own that includes space along with mass and energy. It is a very subtle principle and yet stunning in its simplicity. The author describes it as follows:

"... the Vedas have returned to tell an even greater truth [than mass-energy equivalence]: equivalence of space, mass and energy. Space is no different from matter and energy. In the beginning

in support-violation of parity observed in weak interactions. As the author observes:

"It is obvious that model of the universe should not contradict the nature of these interactions. Weak interaction has complete disregard for many conservation laws including parity... What is so special about weak interaction? Why is it that it does not obey conservation laws like other interactions?... It has been more than forty years since the discovery of parity violation, but cosmologists have not taken into account what particle physicists have proved."

The author shows that this can be seen as an indirect proof of the rotating universe implied in the Vedic model. He then cites possible direct evidence also. He notes that observations by Borge Norland and John P. Ralston on the polarization of light from distant galaxies indicate that the universe is rotating. (This is on top of the well-known Faraday Effect. Since the rate of rotation is slow, one has to look very far to find physical evidence of it.) Their results are disputed by other scientists for the reason that it violates the idea of an isotropic universe, but that is only to be expected. As the author notes: "Rotation of universe and continuous creation of matter and energy are two salient features of the Vedic cosmology."

This brings us to the author's reconstruction of the Vedic universe, which he summarizes as follows: "Like the Big Bang model, the Vedic model assumes that the universe started from a point and is expanding. However, unlike the Big Bang model, universe starts cold with zero mass-energy, and is rotating as well as expanding. There is a similarity with the Steady State model that mass-energy is constantly being created. The difference is that [in the Vedic] the universe is not considered infinitely old, and the creation of mass-energy is only during the expansion phase of the universe. During the contraction phase, the mass-energy is annihilated, so that the universe ends without a singularity."

Clearly, the author's study of the Vedas combined with his knowledge of modern physics has allowed him to present an impressive synthesis of the two. There are some minor difficulties. His reading of the Vedas leads him to postulate the existence of

I-HADITH, occupied a conspicuous position among them. These were revivalist in character and stirred deep religious sentiments among Muslims throughout east, west and north Bengal, and succeeded considerably in rousing the Muslim masses to action. The Tabligh Jamaat and Seerat Conference movements, which recently stirred similar mass enthusiasm in Bangladesh, are reminiscent, and to a great extent also the spiritual progeny, of these movements of the preceding century.

Universal Perspective Religious movements being social phenomena have to be studied in the wider context. Islamic revivalist movements had taken such hold of Bengal in the 19th century that historians rated them as the persistent sign of life in a subjugated and decadent Muslim community. Religious revivalism in itself was not, however, peculiar to the Muslims of Bengal, but had become widespread throughout the Muslim world, affecting the Muslim Ummah as a whole. There is a suggestion that it had cropped up in different parts of the world under the impact of imperialism.

Thus considered, the Wahhabism of Arabia appears to have arisen under the impact of Ottoman imperialism. Mughal and British imperialism produced the movement of Shah Waliullahi and the Teriqah-i-Muhammadiyah. The Fariazi, Taaiyuni and Ahl-i-Hadith movements arose under British imperialism. The Fulani and Sannusiyah of North Africa arose under French and British imperialism, and the Paduri and Muhammadiyah movements of Indonesia under the impact of Dutch imperialism.

In popular parlance these religious reform movements came to be associatively known as Wahhabism and Islamic revivalism, tajdeed al-Islam, as against a somewhat Western Renaissance-oriented Muslim modernism and Pan-Islamism, ittihad al-Islam. The movements, in general, were universal; both aimed at re-awakening Muslims all over the world; and both carried the slogan: 'Islam in danger'. Therefore, there existed considerable mutual sympathy and a good deal of unity of purpose and identity of sentiments between them. Yet, they pursued different goals and occasionally expressed disapproval of each other's programmes and scrupulously maintained exclusiveness and independence of each other's stance.

'take-over process' of the East India Company's rule over Bengal (1757-1857) as against the systematic destruction of the Mughal administration, which has been designated by Lathrop Stoddard as the policy of 'pacific penetration' by Western imperialism. This policy had created many social and economic anomalies especially in the rural life of Bengal.

Little wonder, therefore, that it aroused a deep sense of pity in the minds of Christian missionaries, and a sense of remorse in some good souls from the ranks of English administrators, and also considerable sympathy amongst humanist groups in England. With their blessings, encouragement, help and participation, Raja Ram Mohan Roy laid the foundation of a 'Renaissance' type of modernist/Western social reform movement in Calcutta around 1814, which spurred numerous other social reform movements in Bengal and India for remodelling the Hindu social system.

However, if the British challenge had produced a somewhat positive response among the Hindu elite of Bengal, during the corresponding period it produced a negative response among the Muslims and spurred a number of 'revivalist' religious reform movements, beginning with the Faraizi movement of HAJI SHARIATULLAH in Bengal and the Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah movement of Sayyid Ahmad Shahid of Rai Bareilly in Delhi, both of which came into existence about the year 1818 AD.

In contrast to the Muslim revivalist movements, Raja Ram Mohan Roy's reform movement is generally regarded as a Renaissance movement. It should, nevertheless, be observed that it differed from the European 'Renaissance model', especially as it was deeply infused with a revivalist desire to restore a pristine Hindu or Aryan religious spirit.

The European Renaissance aimed at integrating the classical, secular, Graeco-Roman spirit of the 'rationalism' of the 'past' with the merciful Christian 'morality' of the 'present', to create a 'humanism' that could be the foundation of a happy and civilized 'future' world. In comparison, however, Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Renaissance aimed at resuscitating a pristine Aryan 'Unitarianism of God' with the help of the modern Western rationalist spirit. In the heart of hearts, it was not secular but deeply religious. Consequently some other important Hindu reform movements,

order to grab the amenities of a happy and cultured life under Pax Britannica, to exchange jihad for the protection of the British law, Aman. In a word, they tried for a transition from the abode of war (Darul Harb) to an abode of protection (Darul Aman) by means of giving up political ambition and accepting wholeheartedly the administrative peace, the rule of law, as the be-all and end-all of a happy modern life. These ideals and the accompanying sentiments and emotions became crystallised in one word-loyalism.

The Islamic revivalist movements thrived in Bengal with high emotional fervour from about 1820 to 1870, most of the time at a frantic sentimental level until they were systematically destroyed or tamed as non-political, religious movements by the British government. Thus considered, they may be said to form a 'transitional bridge' from the state of slavery to the state of protectorate. Until the struggle fizzled out, the slogan of 'Darul Aman' and the idea of protectorate could not take hold of Muslim society. After the revivalist movements fizzled out the Renaissance type of Muslim modernism, overtly or covertly pronouncing the slogan of 'loyalism', took charge of leading the Muslim community nearer to the English rulers along the road of constitutional progress.

Functions Coming into being as a puritan reaction to the impact of imperialism, as an international jihad movement and as a move to re-organise and reintegrate local Muslim society in the local socio-political perspective discussed above, the first and foremost task before the Islamic revivalist movements of Bengal was to revive the original doctrines of religion.

This was also the main task set before Hindu reform movements such as the Brahma Samaj and Arya Samaj. In their reformist endeavour, both the groups called for purging their respective societies, but offered grounds for the fresh community-wide contact between them and their like-minded co-religionists across provincial barriers.

One of the functions of Islamic revivalism was thus the 'breaking of isolation' of the Muslims of different parts of the Indian sub-continent which had been caused by the shrinking of the Mughal power during the preceding century.

consciousness of the Muslims. Moreover, their strategy of mass contact and fiery speeches delivered with equal fervour from the pulpit and the political platform, for rousing religious sentiments against internal corruption of Muslim society as well as against the conspiracy of the foreign rulers, succeeded considerably in waking up mass consciousness to the deplorable political and economic situation of the Muslims all over the world.

A third important function of Islamic revivalism in Bengal was thus the widening of general awareness, psychological re-invigoration, and reform and re-organisation of society. In the early 1820s when Sayyid Ahmad Shahid visited the city of Calcutta, he apparently received no opposition from any quarters of the Muslims, Hindus or the government administration. But in the first flush of its mass popularity in rural Bengal, in parts of 24 Parganas and Nadia under Mir Nisar Ali alias Titu Mir from about 1827 to 1831, it came upon the quicksands of a conspiracy of the new class of Hindu zamindars and gomastahs with whom the European indigo planters also joined hands.

However, Haji Shariatullah had lived at Mecca from 1799 to 1818. While he was a student he had closely observed the conflict of the Wahhabis of Arabia with Ottoman imperial power and watched how they were destroyed by Khedive Mohammad Ali at the behest of the Ottoman sultan. The Haji took shelter in patience and sobriety, and saved his movement by retreating completely from politics into the arena of social and religious reform. [Muin-ud-Din Ahmad Khan]

Time to Rekindle Passion for Unity

In India, many civilisations have come together over the years, creating new patterns of universal oneness. Raja Ram Mohan Roy ushered in the age of new thought in 1828. He wrote: "All mankind is one great family of which numerous nations and tribes existing are only various branches".

In Bengal, Rabindranath Tagore's father passed on these thoughts to the poet who wrote: "I love India not because I have had the chance to be born on her soil, but because she has saved through tumultuous ages the living words that were issued from the illuminated consciousness of her sons".

donkeys and the street dogs that are constantly being ill-treated? The environment, too, needs protection. Majestic trees are regularly being chopped down. This decreases forest cover and causes more pollution. So the list is long and painful.

Ecological awareness is the intuitive awareness of the oneness of all life. Our ancient heritage advocates protection not only for human beings and animals but for the elements, too.

Listen to the words of the Atharva Veda, written 4,000 years ago: "We are birds of the same nest,/We may wear different skins,/We may speak different languages,/We may believe in different religions,/We may belong to different cultures,/Yet we share the same home-Our Earth./For man can live individually,/But can survive only collectively/Born on the same planet/Covered by the same skies/Gazing at the same stars/Breathing the same air/We must learn to happily progress together/Or miserably perish together".

Brahman is worshipped as the sole creator and supporter of the universe. This monotheism is based on the interpretation of the early Vedanta, the Upanishads, and the Brahma Sutra. Ram Mohan Roy, founder of Brahmo Samaj, identified the monotheism of Christianity and Islam as of universal validity. Codification of the doctrines came with the main principles of the Nava Samhita, New Dispensation, of Keshub Chandra Sen, the third leader of the movement, in 1881. These are: 1) Harmony of all scriptures, saints, and sects. 2) Harmony of reason and faith, of devotion and duty, of yoga and bhakti. 3) The church of the Samaj stands for One Supreme God, to be worshipped without form. No idolatry in any form may enter the precincts of the church. 4) The church stands for universal brotherhood without distinction of caste or creed or sect. One might add to this the principle of Roy that religious authority should be based on reason and ability, not on priestly caste. Texts from all world religions are used for prayer and worship.

Ram Mohan Roy was born in 1774 to a Brahmin family in the Bengal village of Radhanagar. He was influenced in his youth by studies in Advaita and the monotheism of Islam, and later by the Unitarian movement. The superior kulina castes stood aloof from the British. Roy however was the son of a non-kulina Brahmin

pulpit rather than fixed stereotyped liturgy. However, Keshub himself became a symbol as a master and avatar.

Adherents

The Brahmo Samaj survives as a relatively small but progressive sect mainly in West Bengal. The Tagore family supported the Samaj for three generations.

Hinduism

Hinduism, dating from around 1500 B. C., is the oldest living religion having a membership (1982) of 477,991,300 confined largely to India. It is the most complex, diverse, and tolerant of the world's religions. One can find within Hinduism almost any form of religion--from simple animism to elaborate philosophical systems--which has ever been conceived or practiced by mankind. Hinduism has met the challenge of other religions, primarily, by absorbing them and their practices and beliefs into the mainstream of Hindu religious expression.

The Aryans (noble ones) invaded the Indus valley from Persia in the second millennium B.C. They were basically wandering nomads who spoke an Indo-European language which became the basis for Sanskrit. This early Aryan society developed into three basic socio-economic classes. The priests or Brahmins became the ruling class. The tribal chieftains and their warriors or Kshatriyas were next in line, with the commoners and merchants or Vaishyas rounding out the Aryan society. A fourth group, the conquered pre-Aryan people or Shudras, were at the bottom of society. Eventually these divisions developed into a religiously supported caste system.

The Vedas are the sacred scriptures of Hinduism. The four basic Vedic books are the Rig-Veda, the Yajur-Veda, the Sama-Veda, and the Atharva-Veda. Each of the Vedic books is divided into four parts. Each contains a section of hymns to the gods (Mantras), a section of ritual materials (Brahmanas), a section of guidance for hermits (Aranyakas), and a fourth section of philosophical treatises (Upanishads). The Mantra and Brahmana sections are the oldest materials with the Aranyakas and Upanishads added later. This Vedic literature evolved during the

contemporary India, its social influence is still strong. The Code of Manu also teaches the various stages through which a man is expected to pass in a successful life: student, householder, hermit, and wandering beggar. These stages are only for twice born men. Women should stay in the home under the protection and control of the chief male in the household. The code requires the cultivation of pleasantness, patience, control of mind, non-stealing, purity, control of senses, intelligence, knowledge, truthfulness, and non irritability. The killing of cows is listed among the greatest of sins.

The composition of the great epic poem, the Bhagavad-Gita, sometime between the second century B.C. and the third century A.D. marks the end of the period of classical Hinduism. The Bhagavad-Gita is found within the text of a much longer poem and is probably the most highly esteemed scripture of Hinduism. In the poem Arjuna, a Hindu knight, for the first time in the recorded history of Hinduism, raises the question of the propriety of killing people. He is answered by his charioteer, Krishna, who turns out to be an incarnation of the god Vishnu. Arjuna is told he must be loyal to his duty as a warrior and kill. The Gita also teaches a variety of means of personal salvation. One may achieve release from life (Nirvana) through asceticism, through meditation, through devotion to and worship of the gods, or through obedience to the rules of his caste,

After the close of the classical period subtle changes gradually appear in Hinduism. Out of the millions of major and minor gods, worship tended to centre around the Trimurti: Brahma, the creator; Shiva, the destroyer; and Vishnu, the preserver. Among this trinity, Brahma receives the least attention. Shiva is the most popular probably because he is the god of sex and reproduction and appeals to the deprivation experienced by the masses. His various goddess consorts such as Kali are equally revered. According to mythology, Vishnu has appeared on earth in nine forms and will come a tenth time to bring the world to an end. Among his appearances are Krishna; Gautama, the Buddha; Matsya, the fish who saved Manu from the great flood; and Christ.

The majority of the people of India seek salvation through devotion to the gods while many of the wealthy and educated seek salvation through the way of knowledge. This intellectual

The Hindu Reformation

"...Thus it may be said that as early as 1820 India had come into the direct current of European thought and had begun to participate in the fruits of Europe's intellectual quest. The Brahmo Samaj lived up to this ideal. Its social message was Westernization, to purge Hinduism of the customs and superstitions with which it was overlaid, to raise the status of women, to bridge the yawning gulf between popular and higher Hinduism, to fight relentlessly against caste, social taboo, polygamy and other well entrenched abuses. To the educated Hindu, who felt unsettled in mind by the attack of the missionaries, the Brahmo Samaj provided the way out.

The Brahmo tradition has become so much a part of the Indian way of life now, that one is inclined to overlook its distinctive contribution. It does not lie primarily in the fact that it enabled Hinduism to withstand the onslaught of the missionaries, but in that it introduced the modern approach to Indian problems..."

The Hindu Reformation of the nineteenth century is one of the great movements of the age which by its massiveness and far-reaching significance takes its place with the most vital developments of modern history.

As it was a slow process and took place under the cover of British authority and was not always obvious to the outsider, it has so far escaped attention. A further reason why, in spite of its tremendous import, it passed unnoticed is that, by its very nature, it was an internal movement which did not touch or influence outside events. But India's independence and emergence into the modern world would hardly have been possible without the slow but radical adjustments that had taken place within the fold of Hinduism for a period of over 100 years.

In order to appreciate this movement fully it is necessary to understand what the position of Hinduism was in the beginning of the nineteenth century. 700 years of Islamic authority over the Indo-Gangetic Plains from Delhi to Calcutta had left Hinduism in a state of depression. It was the religion of a subject race, looked down on with contempt by the Muslims as idolatry. It enjoyed no prestige and for many centuries its practice had been tolerated

Vaishnava religion of great vitality, had sunk to a very low level of superstition, extravagance and immorality. A seeker after truth, Ram Mohan turned to the new religion which the missionaries were preaching. He studied Hebrew and Greek to understand Christianity better. But his scholarship was taking him at the same time to the well of European liberalism. Ram Mohan Roy was in fact the last of the Encyclopaedists. Thus he came to reject Christ, while accepting the wide humanism of European thought, its ethics and its general approach to the problems of life.

His book, *The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness*, is an interpretation of Christianity in this new light, a reply to the missionaries rather than a call to Indians.

While Ram Mohan Roy thus rejected the Christian claims, he realized that Hinduism had to be re-interpreted. That interpretation he attempted in the Brahmo Samaj, a new reformed sect of Hinduism, which he founded. The Samaj was not in its essence a Christian dilution of Hinduism, as has often been said, but a synthesis of the doctrines of the European Enlightenment, with the philosophical views of the Upanishads. As a religion Brahmo Samaj was based firmly on the Vedanta of genuine Hindu tradition, but its outlook on life was neither Christian nor Hindu, but European, and derived its inspiration from the intellectual movements of the eighteenth century.

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how their own teachings flowed directly from these three sources. Thus it was, that Sankara, the reformer of Hinduism in the eighth century, had to write his commentary on all the three. It is to the doctrines of the Vedanta, as embodied in the Upanishads, that Ram Mohan Roy turned when he also felt the need of a new religious interpretation.

Arya Samaj, Dayananda Saraswati...

The demand of new India was not for a new sect. It was for a universal religion acceptable to all Hindus. The first effort to provide such a basis was by Dayananda Saraswati who saw in the Vedas the revealed Word of God and felt that, as the Vedas were accepted by all who claimed to be Hindus, a religion based on the Vedas should have universal appeal in India.

The Muslims had a revealed book, the Holy Quran. The Christians had the Bible, and Swami Dayananda felt that the amorphous and indefinable nature of Hinduism, which exposed it to so much weakness, could be remedied by providing the Hindus also with a revealed book. This seemed all the more the right path since the Vedas gave no authority to the usages and superstitions that had come to be accepted by the masses as Hinduism.

There was no sanction in the Vedas for caste, for the prohibition of the marriage of widows, for untouchability, for the taboo on food and the other characteristics of popular Hinduism which had been seized upon by the missionaries in their campaign and were being widely rejected by Hindu intelligentsia.

Swami Dayananda in his Satyarth Praksah, or the Light of True Meaning, made a brave and ingenious attempt to see in the Vedas all that the Christians and the Muslims were claiming to be the basis of their religions, universal brotherhood and a direct and non-metaphysical approach to God.

His Arya Samaj, however successful as a militant organization for the protection of Hinduism from the onslaughts of Islam and Christianity, never appealed to the Hindus outside the Punjab. The reasons were simple.

The attempt to go back to the Vedas involved a denial of the Hindu culture of the last three thousand years, a refusal to see

Mrs. Annie Besant, an extremely gifted, persuasive and dynamic personality, became the President of the Society, its propaganda for a reformed universal Hinduism became more marked and was carried on incessantly through schools, colleges and an enormous output of popular literature. Mrs. Besant had become steeped in Indian culture and her popular approach was Vedantic, as her translation of the Gita would testify.

Swami Vivekananda...

The Vedantic reformation which was thus in the air found its most widely accepted exponent in Swami Vivekananda. Vivekananda was a Western-educated Bengali who came under the influence of Ramakrishna, a mystic whose personality had made a deep impression on the Bengali society of his day. Vivekananda was fired by a desire to revive Hinduism and purify its religious and social teachings. Initiated a Sanyasi, he toured the length and breadth of India spreading the gospel of Vedanta. A prolonged visit to America and a tour in England inflamed his patriotism, his desire to rejuvenate Hindu society and to give Hinduism a social purpose. His fervent declaration that he did not 'believe in a religion that does not wipe out the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth' expresses clearly the changed temper of Hinduism. His own mission he described as follows. Answering the question: 'What do you consider to be the function of your movement as regards India?' the Swami said: 'To find the common bases of Hinduism and to awaken the national consciousness to them.' That common basis he found in the Vedanta which he interpreted in popular phraseology and preached untiringly all over India.

'All the philosophers of India who are orthodox have to acknowledge the authority of the Vedanta and all our present-day religions, however crude some of them may appear to be, however inexplicable some of their purposes may seem, one who understands them and studies them can trace them back to the ideas of the Upanishads. So deeply have these Upanishads sunk into our race that those of you who study the symbology of the crudest religion of the Hindus will be astonished to find sometimes figurative expressions of the Upanishads. Great spiritual and philosophical ideas in the Upanishads are today with us, converted

orthodox province of Madras, Hindu religious endowments were placed under the control of public bodies. The movement for the regeneration of the depressed classes assumed a national character, and their participation in social and political life became a major factor in the last days of British rule.

Popular Hinduism had a more vigorous life than it ever had in the immediately preceding times, but it had in the course of a hundred years changed its character and temper, though it had kept much of its form.

The major difficulty of Hinduism which had made it a wild jungle growth of widely varying customs, usages and superstitions was its lack of a machinery of reform and unification. The institutions of Hinduism, which in a large measure got identified with 'the religion itself, were the results of certain historical factors. They were upheld by law and not by religion. Vivekananda put the point well when he wrote:

'Beginning from Buddha down to Ram Mohan Roy, everyone made the mistake of holding caste to be a religious institution.... But in spite of all the ravings of the priests, caste is simply a crystallized social institution, which after doing its service is now filling the atmosphere of India with stench.'

The caste organization, the joint family, the rights of inheritance and the relationships arising out of them, which in the main are the special features of Hindu society, are legal and not religious. They are man-made institutions which do not claim Divine origin or religious sanction, and are upheld by man-made laws and not by any church or priesthood. It is a truism to say that legislation of today meets the social needs of yesterday and, unavoidably, law, as a conservative force, lags one step behind social necessities.

When the great codes of Hindu Law were evolved, no doubt they represented the social forces of the time, but soon they had become antiquated. The succession of authoritative commentaries would show that the urge for modifications was widely felt and, in the absence of a legislative authority, the method of a progressive interpretation in each succeeding generation was the only one available to Hindu thinkers. The immutability of Hindu law and customs was never a principle with the authors of the great codes

authority with a majority of non-official elected Indians, which; was both competent to change the laws of Hindu society and to enforce obedience to such laws through the length and breadth of India. In the provinces the direction of government passed in a large measure to elected legislatures.

The legislative achievements of the Central and Provincial Governments in the field of social reform have been fundamental, though they did not go anywhere as far as the public demanded. The Civil Marriage Act and the Age of Consent Act (raising the marriageable age of girls to 14) were among the more important pieces of legislation which the Central Indian Legislative Assembly enacted.

The Civil Marriage Act validates marriages between men and women of different castes of Hinduism. It strikes at the very root of the orthodox Brahminical conception of caste, and annuls the laws of Manu and the other orthodox codes of Hinduism.

'The immutable law', prohibiting Varna-Samkara or the mixture of castes, ceased by this single piece of legislation to operate through the length and breadth of India.

The Age of Consent Act was equally revolutionary. It was the custom for over two thousand years at least for large sections of people to have girls married before the age of puberty. There was not only long tradition behind the custom, but it was considered compulsory at least for Brahmins in the light of certain authoritative texts. The Indian legislature made this custom illegal, though it had so much religious authority behind it, and the performance of such marriages became a penal offence.

Thus by the end of the third decade, the Hindu reformation had made enough progress to enable the new society to direct its social forces towards general betterment.

The reformation of Hinduism has been treated in some detail, because without an appreciation of its consequences the effects of Western education on Indian society will not be fully clear.

All religions, including Hinduism, have sects. A brief survey of Sects (past and present) in other religions produced the following results:

(Religions listed in alphabetical order)

creeds. Hinduism accommodates all types of men. It prescribes spiritual food for everybody, according to his qualification and growth. This is the beauty of this magnanimous religion.

This is the glory of Hinduism. Hence there is no conflict among the various cults and creeds. The Rig-Veda declares: "Truth is one; sages call it various names-Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti." The Upanishads declare that all the paths lead to the same goal, just as cows of variegated colours yield the same white milk. Lord Krishna says in the Gita: 'Howsoever men approach Me, even so do I welcome them, for the path men take from every side is Mine.' All diversities are organized and united in the body of Hinduism.

Hinduism provides food for reflection for the different types of thinkers and philosophers all over the world. All sorts of philosophy are necessary. What appeals to one may not appeal to another, and what is easy for one may be difficult for another. Hence the need for different standpoints. All philosophies of Hinduism are points of view. They are true in their own way. They take the aspirant step by step, stage by stage, till he reaches the acme or the pinnacle of spiritual glory. Sanatana-Dharmists, Arya-Samajists, Deva-Samajists, Jainas, Buddhists, Sikhs and Brahmo-Samajists are all Hindus only, for they rose from Hinduism, and emphasized one or more of its aspects.

The Hindus are divided into three great classes, *viz.*,

1. Vaishnavas: Who worship the Lord as Vishnu;
2. Shaivas: Who worship the Lord as shiva; and
3. Saktas: Who adore Devi or the Mother aspect of the Lord.

In addition, there are the Sauras, who worship the Sun-God; Ganapatyas who worship Ganesh as supreme; and Kumaras who worship Skanda as the godhead.

The Vaishnavas are usually distinguished into four principal Sampradayas or sects. Of these, the most ancient is the Sri Sampradaya founded by Ramanuja Acharya about the middle of the twelfth century. The followers of Ramanuja adore Vishnu and Lakshmi, and their incarnations. They are called Ramanujas or Sri Sampradayins or Sri Vaishnavas. The teachers are Brahmins. The disciples may be of any caste. They all recite the Ashtakshara

Ramanandis

The followers of Ramananda are the Ramanandis. They are well-known in upper Hindusthan (India). They are branch of the Ramanuja sect. They offer their worship to Lord Rama, Sita, Lakshmana and Hanuman. Ramananda was a disciple of Ramanuja. He flourished at Varanasi about the beginning of the fourteenth century. His followers are numerous in the Ganga (Ganges) valley of India. Their favourite work is the 'Bhakti-Mala.' Their sectarian marks are like those of the Ramanujas. The Vairagis are the ascetics among the Ramanandis.

Vallabhacharins or Rudra Sampradayins

The Vallabhacharins form a very important sect in Mumbai, Gujarat and the Central India. Their founder was born in the forest Camparanya in 1479. He is regarded as an incarnation of Krishna. The Vallabhacharins worship Krishna as Baba-Gopala. Their idol is one representing Krishna in his childhood till his twelfth year. The Gosains or teachers are family men. The eight daily ceremonials for God in the temples are Mangala, Srngara, Gvala, Raja Bhoga, Utthapana, Bhoga, Sandhya and Sayana. All these represent various forms of adoration of God.

The mark on the forehead consists of two red perpendicular lines meeting in a semicircle at the root of the nose and having a round dot of red between them. The necklace and rosary are made of the stalk of the Tulasi (holy Basil plant).

The great authority of the sect is the Srimad Bhagavata as explained in the Subodhini, the commentary thereon of Vallabhacharya. The members of the sect should visit Sri Nathdvara, a holy shrine, at least once in their lives.

The Chaitanyas (Hare Krishna Movement)

This sect is prominent in Bengal and Orissa. The founder Chaitanya Mahaprabhu or Lord Gouranga, was born in 1485. He was regarded as an incarnation of Lord Krishna. He took sannyasa (monkhood) at the age of twenty-four. He went to Jagannath where he taught Vaishnava doctrines.

The Chaitanyas worship Lord Krishna as the Supreme Being. All castes are admissible into the sect. The devotees constantly

incarnation of the Sun-God (Surya). The followers worship Krishna and Radha (Krishna's consort) conjointly. Their chief scripture is the Srimad Bhagavata Purana.

The followers have two perpendicular yellowish lines made from Gopichandan clay and applied from the root of the hair to the commencement of each eye-brow and there meeting in a curve. This represents the footprint of Lord Vishnu.

The Nimbarkas or Nimavats are scattered throughout the whole of upper India. They are very numerous around Mathura. They are also the most numerous of the Vaishnava sects in Bengal.

The Madhavas

The Madhavas are Vaishnavas. They are known as Brahma Sampradayins. The founder of the sect was Madhavacharya, otherwise called Ananda Tirtha and also called Purna-Prajna. He was born in 1200 ad. He was a great opponent of Sankaracharya's Advaita system of philosophy. He is regarded as an incarnation of Vayu or the Wind-God. He erected and consecrated at Udipi the image of Lord Krishna. The Gurus of the Madhava sect are Brahmins and Sannyasins. The followers bear the impress of the symbols of Vishnu upon their breasts and shoulders. They are stamped with a hot iron. Their marks on the foreheads consist of two perpendicular lines made with Gopichandana and joined at the root of the nose. They make a straight black line (using charcoal from incense offered to Krishna), which terminates in a round mark made with tumeric. The Madhavas are divided into two classes called the Vyasakutas and the Dasakutas. They are found in Karnataka. Truthfulness, study of scriptures, generosity, kindness, faith and freedom from envy form the moral code of Madhavas. They give the Lord's names to their children (Namakarana Sanskar), and mark the body with His symbols (Ankana). They practise virtue in thought, word and deed (Bhajana).

Radha Vallabhis

Radha Vallabhis worship Krishna as Radha-Vallabha, the Lord or the Lover of Radha. Harivans was the founder of this sect. Seva Sakhi Vani gives a detailed description of the notion of this sect

Telugu Smartas

1.Murukinadu, 2.Velanadu 3.Karanakammalu 4.Puduru Dravidis 5.Telahanyam 6.Konasima Dravidi and 7.Aruvela Niyogis

Lingayats

They are called Vira Shaivas. They are found in Mysore and Karnataka. They wear on their neck a Linga of Lord Shiva that is placed in a small silver box.

Other Shaiva sects

Akas Mukhis, Gudasas, Jangamas, Karalingis, Nakhis, Rukharas, Sukharas, Urdhabahus, Ukkaras are all Shaiva sects.

The Saktas

The saktas are worshippers of Devi, the Universal Mother. Dakshinis, Vamis, Kanchelias, Kararis are all Sakta sects.

Miscellaneous

The Sauras adore the Sun, the Ganapatyas adore Ganesh, and the Kaumaras adore Skanda.

The non-Brahmins of South India are Naidu, Kamma Naidu, Chetty, Mudaliar, Gounder, Pillai, Nair, Nayanar and Reddy.

Nanak Shahis of seven classes (*viz.*, Udasis, Ganj-bhakshis, Ramrayis, Sutra Shahis, Govinda Sinhis, Nirmalas, Nagas), Baba Lalis, Prana nathis, Sadhus, Satnamis, Shiva Narayanis are other miscellaneous sects.

The Arya Samaj

The founder of the Arya Samaj was Swami Dayananda Saraswati, who was born in Kathiawar in 1824. This Samaj is more of a social institution, with a religious background. It has Gurukulas, schools, and Pathshalas. The Suddhi Sabha is a proselytizing branch of the Arya Samaj.

[Note: The followers of the Arya Samaj do not perform idol worship. Swami Dayanand Saraswati wrote "Satyarth Parkash" (Light of Truth). This volume serves as the principal guiding light of the Arya Samaj. Some of the principles of the Arya Samaj are: God is the primary source of true knowledge and of all that is

The Sikhs

"Sikhism, while some of its' founding Guru's were Hindu, was created as a response to Hinduism and the reign of the Muslim Mughal empires."-KS Gidda 'Obedience to the Guru brings release from future births' this is a firm conviction of the Sikhs. Sikhs adopt the five Kakas, viz., 1. The Kes (uncut hair), 2. The Kachhca (short drawers), 3. The Kara (iron bangle), 4. The Kirpan (steel dagger), and 5. The Kangha (small-tooth comb worn in the hair).

The Udasis are an ascetic order of the Nanaksahi Sikhs. Srichand, son of Guru Nanak, embraced Sannyasa. Udasis are his followers. Lakshmichand, another son of Guru Nanak, led the life of a house-holder. Vedis are his followers. Nirmalas are ascetic followers of Guru Govind Singh.

The Akalis are brave warriors. The Akalis wear a distinctive dress of blue, and a black turban.

The teachings of Guru Nanak are contained in the first book of the Adi Granth.

No Sikh smokes tobacco.

Sadhus and Sannyasins

Salutations unto the ancient Rishis, seers, saints, paramhansa sannyasins and sadhus, who are the repositories of divine knowledge and wisdom and who guide the destiny of the world in the past, present and future.

Every religion has a band of anchorites who lead the life of seclusion and meditation. There are Bhikshus in Buddhism, Fakirs in Mohammedanism (Islam), Sufistic Fakirs In Sufism, and Fathers and Reverends in Christianity. The glory of a religion will be lost absolutely if you remove these hermits or Sannysins or those who lead a life of renunciation and divine contemplation. It is these people who maintain or preserve the religions of the world. It is these people who give solace to the householders when they are in trouble and distress. They are the messengers of the Atman-knowledge and heavenly peace. They are the harbingers of divine wisdom and peace. They are the disseminators of Adhyatmic science and Upanishadic revelations. They heal the sick, comfort

Then, there are Akhada Sannyasins, *viz.*, Niranjana Akhada and Jhuni Akhda. They belong to the order of Sri Sankara. They are Dasanamis.

They are found in the Uttar Pradesh State only. Rishikesh and Haridwar are colonies for Sannyasins. Varanasi also is among the chief abodes of Sannyasins.

Shaivas

In South India, there are Tamil Sannyasins who belong to the Kovilur Math and Dharmaputram Adhinam. They do not belong to the Sri Sankara order. They are Shaivas.

Nagas

Nagas are Shaiva Sannyasins. They are in a naked state. They smear their bodies with ashes. They have beard and matted locks.

Udasis

Guru Nanak's order of ascetics is called Udasis. They correspond to Sannyasins and Vairagis. They are indifferent to the sensual pleasures of this world (Udasina). Hence they are called Udasis.

Vairagis

A Vairagi is one who is devoid of passion. Vairagis are Vaishnavas. They worship Lord Rama, Sita and Hanuman. They read the Ramayana of Tulasidas. The mendicant Vaishnavas of the Ramanandi class are the Vairagis. Sri Ananda, the twelfth disciple of Ramananda, instituted this ascetic order.

Rama Sanehis

The founder of this order was Ramcharan who was born in the year 1718 in a village near Jaipur in Rajasthan. The Rama Sanehi mendicants are of two classes, *viz.*, the Videhis who are naked and the Mihinis who wear two pieces of cotton cloth dyed red in ochre.

Their monastery is in Shahapur in Rajasthan. The Rama Sanehi sect has the largest following in Mewar and Alwar. They are found also in Mumbai and Poona (in Maharashtra State), Surat, Ahmedabad in Gujarat State), and Hyderabad and Varanasi.

orange coloured cloth, a holy thread and tuft and Tri-danda or three-staff. At present, they are very few in number.

Parinami Sect

Sri Pirannath was the founder of this sect. He was born in 1675 at Jamnagarh, district Rajkot, in Kathiawar. He was the Devan (chief minister) of Raja Jam Jasa. The followers are to practise Ahimsa, Satya and Daya-non-violence, truthfulness and compassion. They study the sacred book, Kul Jam Svarup or Atma-Bodha, in Hindi, which contains the teachings of Sri Pirannath. It contains 18000 Chaupais. They worship Bala-Krishna, *i.e.*, Krishna as a small child.

The followers are found mostly in the Punjab, Gujarat, Assam, Nepal and Mumbai. There are two Maths or monasteries-one at Jamnagarh and the other at Pamna.

Smarta Sect

What is the universalistic Smarta Sect?

Smartism is an ancient brahminical tradition reformed by Shankara in the ninth century. Worshiping six forms of God, this liberal Hindu path is monistic, nonsectarian, meditative and philosophical. Aum Namah Shivaya.

Smarta means a follower of classical smriti, particularly the Dharma Shastras, Puranas and Itihasas. Smartas revere the Vedas and honour the agamas. Today this faith is synonymous with the teachings of Adi Shankara, the monk-philosopher, known as shanmata sthapanacharya, "founder of the six-sect system." He campaigned India-wide to consolidate the Hindu faiths of his time under the banner of Advaita Vedanta. To unify the worship, he popularized the ancient Smarta five-Deity altar-Ganapati Surya, Vishnu, Shiva and Shakti-and added Kumara. From these, devotees may choose their "preferred Deity," or Ishta Devata. Each God is but a reflection of the one Saguna Brahman. Shankara organized hundreds of monasteries into a ten-order, dashanami system, which now has five pontifical centres. He wrote profuse commentaries on the Upanishads, Brahma Sutras and Bhagavad Gita. Shankara proclaimed, "It is the one Reality which appears to our ignorance as a manifold universe of names and forms and

the Parliament of World Religions in Chicago in 1893 to present Ramakrishna's teachings. He won instant celebrity and was hailed as a hero in India for his vigorous advocacy of Hinduism. In 1895 he founded the Vedanta Society in New York City to promote Hindu ideas.

Vivekananda primarily used English in his work of reforming Hinduism and stressing the inclusive aspects of Hindu spirituality over ritual and rules. Another reform-minded leader of the 19th century, Dayananda Sarasvati, used Hindi in responding to the challenges of Christianity and modernity. Sarasvati founded the Arya Samaj, a movement also dedicated to modernizing Hindu practices and asserting the universality of the Hindu tradition. These movements helped revitalize Hinduism.

Another issue that engaged Hindu reformers was the plight of the lowest social class, the panchama jatis who are also known as untouchables. Local movements, such as one led by Sri Narayana Guru in Kerala, were most successful at reform. Narayana, who was born in 1856, believed that education and greater self-esteem, rather than confrontation and blame, would elevate the untouchables. He established temples where all castes could pray together.

Raja Ram tried to create a new Hindu religion philosophy and enfolded in it the existence of one God and other beliefs, which were then not the predominant features in Hinduism. He attacked some Hindu traditions and features among them caste system, child marriages, Sati-burning of the live wife over her dead husband's pyre, idolatry and other beliefs. He tried to change the popular Hindu traditions and claimed that the popular Hindu traditions were different from the real Hindu beliefs.

Raja Ram and his organization 'Brahmo Samaj' tried to change the social order of India. He established newspapers and schools all around India. He convinced the British in 1829 to outlaw Sati. But during that period there wasn't yet an Indian ethos among the Indians. Indians were never one nation but always a collection of different entities. They were used to different rulers including non-Indians. From their point of view the British were just another ruler over them (see India in the past). But the main contribution

word sati is righteous. But as written earlier the women named Sati, in Hindu religious literature, did not commit suicide on their dead husband's pyre. Therefore the custom of burning the widow on her dead husband's pyre probably did not evolve from religious background but from social background.

There are different theories about the origins of Sati. One theory says that Sati was introduced to prevent wives from poisoning their wealthy husbands and marry their real lovers. Other theory says that Sati began with a jealous queen who heard that dead kings were welcomed in heaven by hundreds of beautiful women, called Apsaras. And therefore when her husband died, she demanded to be burnt on her dead husband's pyre and so to arrive with him to heaven and this way to prevent the Apsaras from consorting with her husband. There are also other theories about the origins of Sati.

Even though Sati is considered an Indian custom or a Hindu custom it was not practiced all over India by all Hindus but only among certain communities of India. On the other hand, sacrificing the widow in her dead husband's funeral or pyre was not unique only to India. In many ancient communities it was an acceptable feature. This custom was prevalent among Egyptians, Greek, Goths, Scythians and others. Among these communities it was a custom to bury the dead king with his mistresses or wives, servants and other things so that they could continue to serve him in the next world.

Another theory claims that Sati was probably brought to India by the Scythians invaders of India. When these Scythians arrived in India, they adopted the Indian system of funeral, which was cremating the dead. And so instead of burying their kings and his servers they started cremating their dead with his surviving lovers. The Scythians were warrior tribes and they were given a status of warrior castes in Hindu religious hierarchy. Many of the Rajput clans are believed to originate from the Scythians. Later on other castes who claimed warrior status or higher also adopted this custom.

This custom was more dominant among the warrior communities in north India, especially in Rajasthan and also among the higher castes in Bengal in east India. Among the Rajputs of

ruler's property intensifies the theory that Sati was introduced to India by the Scythian invaders of India.

In some very rare incidences mothers committed Sati on their son's pyre and in even more rare cases husbands committed Sati on their wives pyres.

Raj Ram Mohan Roy vs. Dayananda

Hindu Renaissance, which is referred to as a religious and political movement, is closely related to a burgeoning Indian Nationalism. Hindu revivalism is of vital importance in the development of Hinduism as a world religion. The Hindu Renaissance had a tendency to play down the difference between theological traditions and to regulate ritual level, below the ethical spirituality of the Upanishads and the Gita. Hindu reform movement developed to restore the perceived greatness of Hinduism's ancient past, to adopt rationalist elements from within Christianity, and to pay particular attention to social and ethical concerns. The leaders of Hindu renaissance like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Dayananda Saraswati played an important role in the awakening of social and religious reforms.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) was born of a distinguished Brahmin family in Bengal. He was educated at the Muslim University at Patna where he studied Arabic and Persian philosophical literature. He also studied Sanskrit in Varanasi, as well as English, Hebrew and Greek with a view to translating Bible into Bengali. Because of the Muslim influence, particularly Sufi, Roy was a St...

The main contribution of Brahmo Samaj to the society of India was that it evoked issues that were common to the people all around the Indian sub continent.

They make faith in the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth optional. He wanted to return to the "Sanatana Dharma", the eternal law, which Hindus have moved away from by worshipping icons and reading Epics and Purans. He also supported remarriage of widows, if their previous marriage had not consummated. marriage by choice? the most ancient form of marriage in India-is the best form of marriage. He lost his faith in the Shaiva religion of image worship, when he saw mice climbing over the temple icon, eating

of the "The International Association for Religious Freedom". Rationalist in everything, it does not deny the possibility of Divine Revelation, but reserves the right to test the validity of what is supposed to be revelation. The connection between the Brahmo Samaj and the other liberal churches of the world is best understood when we considered the basics of Universalism, which are dealt with in the following paragraphs:

Duncan Howlett has aptly described Universalism as a doctrine of

"Testing, Questing and never Resting, with Open Mind and Open Heart."

Each of these items bears detailed examination. The root question is how can we be sure about the truth of our beliefs? After all, there is no doubt that we human beings are fallible. The only way we can surmount our human fallibility is by continually testing the validity of our assumptions. We have to accept that we are prone to making mistakes and deceiving one another all the time. Even in the age of computers, there is always the possibility of mistakes being made in programming or worse still, valuable data being lost on account of viruses deliberately planted by misguided souls. We must therefore check everything by all the means at our disposal. This is true even in the case of religion, where we can no longer be certain of the infallibility of scriptures or prophets.

If our human capacity for error is a severe limitation, then our imagination and probing curiosity are surely among our greatest assets. It is the human spirit of inquiry and questing, in other words, seeking for the truth, which is behind all advances in Philosophy or Religion. The enquiring mind pushes beyond ideas that we already have, in order to discover new perfections. In this process of Questing, we are never really satisfied until we feel that we have gone as far as is humanly possible.

This is what is meant by "never Resting". On the path of discovery we are bound to meet like-minded souls also engaged in the same search for truth. We must be open to dialogue with them, and at least listen to them even if we do not agree. The spirit of the "open mind" is a safeguard against dogma, which has no place in Universalism.

to visit Europe, where he was much admired by the intellectuals. He died in Bristol.

He was friendly with another famous Bengali, Dwarkanath Tagore. Prior to his departure to Europe, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had asked Dwarkanath Tagore's son, Debendranath Tagore, to continue his work in his absence. Debendranath Tagore took an active interest in the Brahmo Samaj, and began to transform the Brahmo Samaj into a spiritual fraternity. He formulated the "Brahmo-upadesa" which were a set of readings from the ancient Hindu book, the "Upanishads."

Debendranath Tagore's successor was Keshab Chandra Sen. He sought to incorporate Christian ideals into the Brahmo Samaj movement. He began the compilation of a scripture including passages from the Holy Books of many religions-Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and Muslim.

Gradually, due to differences in certain areas of religious beliefs, three institutions arose:

- The Adi (Original) Brahmo Samaj-founded by Debendranath Tagore
- The Naba-Bidhan (New Dispensation) Samaj-founded by Keshab Chandra Sen
- The Sadharan (Common) Brahmo Samaj-founded by Pandit Shivanath Shastri

The Sadharan Brahmo Samaj sought to provide a more rational and monotheistic interpretation of the Upanishads. A "mandir" (prayer house) was built in Cornwallis Street, (now re-named "Bidhan Sarani") Calcutta. Eventually these three Samajes united to form the "Brahmo Sammilan Samaj," and a "mandir" was built in Bhowanipur, Calcutta. This celebrated its centenary in 1997.

The Brahmo Samajes grew in several Indian cities and abroad. There are records of one being present in Rangoon and in London as far back as 1911.

Social Welfare

Removing The Caste System: The caste system has been a part of Hindu society for hundreds of years. It's inherent divisive nature and social injustices were abhorrent to the early Brahmos.

the Brahmo Samaj at Barishal (Bengal) appointed the first woman Brahmo preacher (Manorama Mazumdar).

This article was written by Dr. Sumit Chanda, based on source material provided by the Brahmo Sammilan Samaj at Calcutta. The drawings originally formed part of the Poster Exhibition held in August-September, 1997, on the occasion of the Centenary celebration of the Brahmo Sammilan Samaj. These have been reproduced with the kind permission of Mr. P.R. Das Gupta, the Secretary of the Brahmo Sammilan Samaj.

Brahmo Wedding: In a Brahmo wedding, the bride and the groom, as adults, declare in an open house that each is willing to accept the other as a partner for life. Thus a Brahmo wedding has no tradition of "giving away" the daughter by her parents. The bride and the groom pray to God together and take their nuptial vows. The minister and the other fellow Brahmos pray for their welfare and future happiness. The bride and groom typically exchange garlands and rings, and the prayers are complemented by singing of hymns.

Millennium Sermon: On the first Maghotsav of this century and in the new millennium I would like to share with you some thoughts that have crossed my mind. The word January comes from the Roman God Janus, who had two heads-one pointing to the past, and one pointing to the future.

As we are celebrating Maghotsav in January at the beginning of the century, it is befitting that we first take a look at the past, and then into the future.

A look at the past takes us to the Renaissance in India, and in Bengal in particular. In 1828 the Brahmo Samaj was established by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who was followed by other leaders like Keshab Chandra Sen and Shivanath Shastri. It was a time of great spiritual social reforms against casteism and the emancipation of women.

It was a period when superstitious and evil customs like the suttee were abolished. It an era when great educational institutions were established in Calcutta. That era has also seen the birth of men like Ramakrishna and Rabindranath and preachers of a non-

all of us. The world, we can hope, will be a peaceful place-not only will there be peace among nations, but also in the hearts all men who will fulfil their duties towards the old, the sick and hungry. Societies and nations will not just think of their own survival but will work for the benefit of others, which is one of the ideals of the promise of the Brahmo Samaj, and that the other principles-"truth, justice and love" shall prevail in the hearts of men and women of the 21st century.

We hope that the hearts and the minds of all the people in the world will be united and the century will be a happier place for all of us. It may seem like a dream but it is up to each one of us to make an effort, however small towards achieving this dream-and making this place a better place.

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