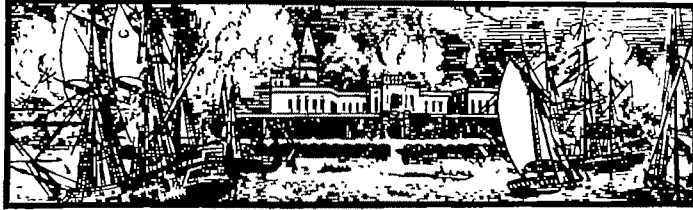


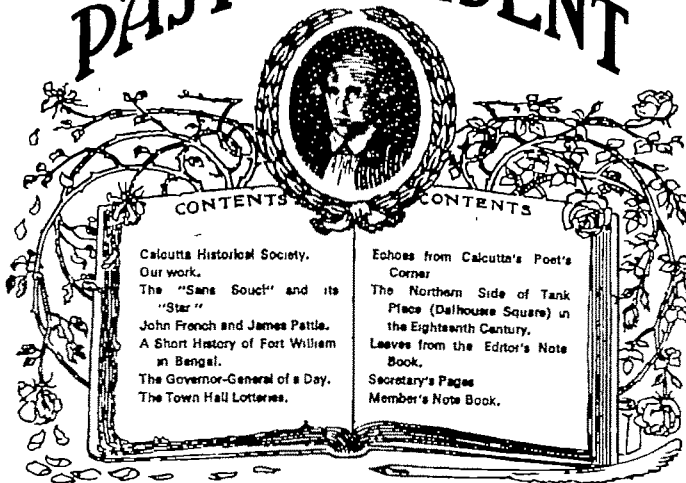
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From the Editor

The Calcutta Historical Society is keeping in good shape and is once again a happy family. For a time it was a house divided against itself. Now the Society is on an even keel again with the change of its secretariat. (For the "summer doldrums", see the new Secretary's Annual Report for 1988 towards the end of this issue.)

The administrative impasse is over and the Editor no longer feels shackled. This, the 1988 issue, should be out by the end of February 1990, followed, hopefully in the summer of 1990, by the issue for 1989, containing, among other items, some of the Calcutta Tercentenary lectures so far arranged by the Society. The target date for the special Tercentenary issue is December 1990. In it will be included reprints of select articles on Calcutta, in which the journal specialised under British editorship.

The special 80th Birthday number of *Bengal Past and Present* (1987) and the comprehensive *Index* to articles etc. published during 1907-85 came out earlier this year. The plentiful fare offered in these two publications should have been in your hands long ago. If not, and if you want to possess these, you should write to our new Secretary at 7 Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta 700 019.

With best wishes for the Calcutta Tercentenary year.

Hiren Chakrabarti
25 December 1989

Important Notes

Books for review, articles and all correspondence concerning them should be addressed to

Dr Hiren Chakrabarti
Honorary Editor, *Bengal Past and Present*
Victoria Memorial
1 Queen's Way
Calcutta 700 071

Articles should be typed on only one side of the paper and double-spaced throughout. They must not *ordinarily* exceed 50 pages (quarto) in length. References to notes may please be numbered in a single series and placed at the end.

Contributors to the journal are requested to state their official as well as residential addresses.

The Editor regrets his inability to return articles which he is unable to publish.

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STATE, STATE FORMATION AND STATECRAFT IN INDIAN HISTORY AND TRADITION*

Satish Chandra

Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

In the study of the Indian political tradition, a key factor which has not been given adequate attention is the problem of the evolution of the state in India. For a long time, a notion was sedulously propagated by western scholars, and accepted by many Indian scholars that since the Indians were more concerned with religion, spiritualism, and the questions of birth and rebirth, *nirvana* etc. they did not bother to study mundane matters such as the state. In their perception, the *Arthashastra* was somewhat of an exception. Recently, efforts have been made by some western scholars to project a somewhat different image. It is accepted that Indian thinkers did speculate on the origin and nature of the state, but tied down as they were to caste and region, they could only conceive of a system of small, local/regional states, linked to each other in concentric circles of friendship and hostility—a concept which was refined to a remarkable degree. In other words, they argue that the concept of an all-India state, based on “the essential unity of India” was, in essence, a gift of the British. It implies that an all-India state was bound to be fragile since it was not rooted in Indian history and tradition. Simultaneously, it is argued that even the Indian concept of the limited state was not based on rationality: the state was primarily to serve spiritual ends, specifically to safeguard the fourfold division of caste, in other words to keep in maintaining a highly inegalitarian social order. A secular bureaucracy could hardly arise in such a state.

In studying the traditions of the formation of the state in India, and its forms, it is necessary to bear in mind that there never was a single Indian tradition regarding the state. Thus, while the *Puranas* emphasized the divine origin and nature of kingship, the Buddhist Canon made it more or less a matter of social contact with the people agreeing to a “share of their rice” to one individual to dispense “anger, censure and banishment”. The *Arthashastra* tradition made the state essentially a secular institution, its objects being wealth and power; whereas the *Dharmashastras* emphasized the more spiritual and humane aspects. Little research has been done on the phases and evolution of this debate. From the time of Ashoka, a definite tradition had, however, evolved that the welfare of the subjects was the prime objective of the state, and that the ruler had no right to

*Presented at the Seminar on “Nation Building, Development Process and Communication”, New Delhi, December 3–7, 1988.

interfere in the religious beliefs of his subjects, but had to give equal favour to all religions. This was adhered to even by Harsha, mis-called "the last Hindu ruler" (the word 'Hindu' was introduced later by the Arab invaders of Sindh). Thus, at Prayag, Harsha honoured in his quinquennial gatherings, Vishnu, the Sun, Brahmans and Buddhists. That the religious tradition regarding the state was by no means the dominant tradition is brought out by the attempt of the 10th century commentator, Medhatithi, who tries to reconcile the religious and the secular traditions of sovereignty. After defining separately the religious and secular duties of the monarch, Medhatithi concludes that in the final resort, a ruler had to be guided in his policy by *rajniti* or secular considerations which the *Dharmashastras* defined only his personal conduct.

As compared to Central and West Asia, no states of an equivalent size, or one covering the length and breadth of India arose during the period of antiquity, with the exception of the Mauryan empire under Ashoka. The tradition of all-India suzerainty was, however, kept alive by harking back to the mythical ruler, Bharat, and the tradition of chakravartin ruler. In some of the larger states, such as the Guptas, Rashtrakutas etc. which were larger in size than most modern day European states, traditions of a bureaucracy and imperial rule can be discerned. However, a break with this tradition seems to have occurred with the emergence of the Rajputs to power in the 8th century. Irrespective of their origin, the Rajputs were strongly attached to family and clan. The state was *bhai banta* or a brotherhood of clan chiefs and blood relations of the ruler among whom there was a distribution of offices and land, and the right to administer and collect land revenue from land. In consequence, the bureaucracy (*kayastha*) became a caste. Narrow regionalism or localism was the hall-mark of this system.

The Rajput system of localism began to be reversed with the establishment of Turkish rule in India, and the groundwork of an all-India polity was laid. A climax to these efforts was reached under the Mughals when almost the entire country was brought under one rule. An all-India polity, however, collapsed before it could be consolidated. Without attempting to trace the complex processes which led to these developments, we might try to analyze some of the seminal aspects which had long range repercussions, and the factors which were responsible for the situation which made possible the British conquest of India.

Some important aspects of the Turko-Mughal polity need to be noted. Both the earlier Turkish Sultans and the Mughals followed a policy of centralization. The basis of this was the iqta/jagir system which implied that central power would be held by a class of people, the *maliks* and

amirs, who were not tied down to any one tract of land but who were appointed by the suzerain and could be transferred from place to place along with their band of cavalrymen at his will.

Second, although the state remained Islamic in form, in practice a large measure of religious freedom had to be accorded to the non-Muslims, and efforts made to obtain the minimum co-operation of the Hindu landholders. These efforts crystallized, and took a definite form under the Mughals. Abul Fazl, who was the principal ideologue of the new Mughal ruling class, asserts in no uncertain terms the ideal of an all-India suzerainty. This is asserted both in relation to the Rajputs of North India as also the Muslim rulers of the Deccan. While internal autonomy could be conceded to a local or regional ruler, he had to accept and acknowledge the all-India Mughal suzerainty, and serve the sovereign in diverse ways which were often left deliberately, vague.

Third, the Mughals tried to underpin the concept of all-India suzerainty by evolving a composite ruling class drawn not only from diverse sections of Muslims, but consisting of regional landed elements, viz. the zamindars, both Hindu and Muslim. Although the service was open to a number of talented people who were not drawn from the landed gentry, the service as a whole was strongly "feudal" in outlook, since it drew its income from those who worked the land.

Alliance with the indigenous ruling classes was further sought to be underpinned by putting forward the concept of equal justice for all, irrespective of rank or religion; broad religious toleration, and of the state being basically a benign institution which would not permit gross exploitation. These concepts which were by no means new, formed the basis of Abul Fazl's concept of suzerainty which he developed in the context of Akbar.

While Abul Fazl's theory of sovereignty was universalist in character, in essence it meant that India was a distinct entity, different from Central Asia and Persia. This coincided with the Mughal perception, having been pushed out of Central Asia by the Uzbeks, both by circumstance and choice the Mughals tried to hold the line of Hindukush and Qandahar as the outer line for the defence of India. Internally, the most distinctive feature of the doctrine was that the suzerain would not "allow the dust of sectarian strife to raise its head" within its boundaries. For the purpose, the ruler had to have a broad liberal outlook which would enable him to rise above sectarian strife. Ideally he should be the spiritual leader of the people. This was supplemented by the theory of *sulh kul*. *Sulh kul*, in turn could only be successful if the ruler was not dependent on any set

of religious leaders, but felt that he derived his authority directly from God. Abul Fazl gave a philosophical basis to this theory by reviving the ancient Persian theory that sovereignty was a light emanating from God (*farr-i-izadi*).

This concept could have, in different circumstances, led to the idea of treating state and organized religion as separate entities. The idea which became popular, however, was the idea of non-sectarianism — or *nipakh* as a contemporary of Akbar, Dadu, called it. In other words, the idea was that the ruler should be above religion or sectarian attachment, but he should be imbued with the best spirit of religion. This, in course of time, became the basis of secularism in India. However, even this limited concept of secularism was not found acceptable by all sections. An influential group of orthodox Muslim theologians and orthodox Hindus rejected it. The former objected that it abolished the difference between Islam and infidelity. Among the Hindus, an orthodox section of brahmians was loath to interact with Islam for fear of loss of identity. While a section of the Rajputs rejected the concept of all-India suzerainty as it was deeply attached to the concept of regional independence.

If Akbar had succeeded in his attempt not to allow sectarian strife to raise its head, it is possible that an atmosphere more conducive to rational thinking might have been generated. As it was, Akbar did try to further strengthen the secular basis of the state, and promoting rationalism by reforming the educational syllabi. He tried to reduce the weight of religious subjects, replacing them by subjects such as mathematics, history etc. Perhaps the most significant experiments in the field of communication and armaments were also made during his reign. The noted rationalist, Fathullah Shirazi, invented a cart which could measure distances, and another which could clean many barrels of guns at the same time. Artillery was improved by the invention of a gun which could be quickly dismantled, transported and reassembled. But the spirit of religious strife was continued by some sections. Dadu, a contemporary of Akbar, who advocated the path of *nipakh* or non-sectarianism, and proclaimed that he was neither a Hindu or a Muslim, and had no faith in any revealed scriptures, confessed sadly that ever since he preached the path of *nipakh*, everyone had turned against him. One consequence, of this attitude of narrowness was that India fell further and further behind the western world in the field of science and technology. Though India did not have religious wars like the west, some important sections continued to be pervaded by a spirit of religious continuousness. This spirit found a culmination under Aurangzeb who used religion as a cloak for his political objectives.

After initial opposition, the Rajputs had, by far and large, accepted, and joined hands with the Mughals in upholding an all-India suzerainty.

The struggle with the Marathas and with the Muslim rulers of the Deccan proved to be both more protracted and difficult and lasted throughout the 17th century. Though often portrayed in religious terms, the conflict was at root secular. At first, neither the Deccan rulers, nor the Marathas accepted the Mughal concept of an all-India suzerainty, and joined hands to oppose it. Later, during the 18th century, when internal contradictions had torn the Mughal state apart, the Marathas tried to replicate the Mughal concept of an all-India suzerainty. However, the Marathas were neither able nor willing to accept the concept of a composite ruling class, consisting of people drawn from different regions and religions. Nor could they adopt the iqta/jagir system which militated against narrow, local roots, and had been the basis of Mughal integration. However, the concept of secularism in the limited sense of justice, broad toleration and non-sectarianism was gradually absorbed, and became a part of the Maratha ethos.

The principles or traditions regarding the state which had emerged in the country before the arrival of the British can hardly be ignored. These were, first, that the state must be a beneficiar institution, second, that it must be basically non-sectarian or secular as the concept was understood, and third, that the ideal of an all-India suzerainty should be the guiding principle though local traditions i.e., local rulers and their associates should not be ignored. At first, British rule in India was, to some extent, acceptable to broad sections of the people in India because it appeared to them to be a defender of these principles. The Marathas appeared to be too particularist. They were neither able to evolve a composite, all-India ruling class, nor united enough even among themselves to evolve an all-India polity. They were unable to maintain the Mughal iqta/jagir system, their revenue grants (*saranjams*) quickly becoming hereditary. Nor were they able to work the Mughal system of administration which though top-heavy had provided for an elaborate system of checks and balances.

British rule in India began to lose legitimacy when the people realized that none of the major principles we have enunciated above were being upheld by the new rulers. The growing poverty of India, growth of communal riots, and the British support to separatist elements were brought home by the nationalist movement as being the direct result of colonial rule. Simultaneously, the nationalist leaders, especially Gandhi and Nehru, emphasized the principle of the state protecting the least advantaged sections of society, secularism, and all-India unity.

It might be mentioned in passing that one of the principal contradictions of British rule was that while it built institutions such as centralized all-India services, an efficient system of transport and communications, a

common all-India currency, a common set of laws etc., which strengthened all-India unity, the British themselves never believed that India could remain united without British colonial rule. Hence, they looked for, and fostered separatist forces, principally those based on religion, region, and even caste. Amongst other things this implied a distortion of Indian history.

It is too early to say whether the separatist forces inherent in Indian history and social structure, and those which were deliberately fanned by the British have been contained. Two points, however, have continued to exercise historians: first, the historical, social and cultural roots of the phenomenon of religious separatism, and second, the social and cultural roots of the growing sense of "self-identity" in specific areas/regions. As is well known, Indian history has witnessed phases of liberalism and religious orthodoxy. Thus, the liberal Mauryan Age witnessed a Hindu resurgence under the Sungas; the liberal age of Kanishka was followed by Hindu resurgence under the Guptas. In the Medieval period, the unorthodox Alauddin Khalji and Muhammad bin Tughlaq were followed by the orthodox Firuz; the liberal Akbar by the orthodox Aurangzeb. Did these changes merely reflect different moods of the ruling class or the predilections by individual rulers, or was there a broader social and intellectual basis for these changes of opinion and approach? Without venturing to go too far back into history, but confining ourselves to the period from the 15th century onwards, it is obvious that both the "non-conformist" monotheistic movements and the more orthodox, Vaishnavite movement among the Hindus; among the Muslims the liberal Chishti and *be shara* sufi movements, and the more orthodox Nagshabandi movement which gathered force during the 17th century continued to flourish side by side. It has often been assumed that the Hindu orthodox reaction of the 17th century was partly a response to the fear that Akbar's liberal policies would be more dangerous to Hinduism than the earlier, more orthodox policies. The revival of the power and influence of the Hindu rajas and zamindars who were supporters of brahmanical orthodoxy, was partly a result of Akbar's liberal policies.

It should be made clear here that these changes of opinion and approach have little relevance to the growth of modern communalism. As Bipan Chandra has rightly pointed out, modern communalism in India was a reaction to the phenomenon of mass politics. Further that the British used caste and sectarian differences for their own political purposes. Thus, modern communalism has little to do with religion, but used religious sentiments for political purposes.

The religious movements of earlier times did have political and social implications, but they were equally concerned with theological/sectarian

and spiritual issues. The period from the 14th century onwards witnessed a struggle regarding the manner in which Islam, representing not only a different faith but a different civilization, adjusted itself to the different social mores and value system of the Hindus. A fundamental agreement had, it appears been reached by the 15th century, and is explicated in the writings of the sufi and the bhakti saints of the time. Akbar only furthered this agreement.

What was the nature and objectives of the Hindu and Muslim orthodox reaction during the 17th century, and what was their social basis? This question needs to be answered because much of modern religious reaction tries to draw its sustenance from this period. We have already noted that the Maratha response was more a regional than a religious response, though religious slogans were used in the process of the struggle. Recent scholarship has shown that the Marathas had even given up the objective of setting up an all-India Hindu suzerainty (*Hindupadpadshahi*). Among other things, this would have implied sharing power with other Hindu regional elites, such as the Rajputs, Jats etc.—an idea which appeared alien to the Marathas. Thus, the slogan of *Hindupadpadshahi* was withdrawn when Peshwa Baji Rao was duly enrolled as a Mughal mansabdar in 1742.

As distinct from the Marathas, the extent of the Jat power never extended beyond the area of Jat peasant domination. The Jat struggle against the Mughals was more protracted, and often assumed the form of peasant resistance, in the Agra-Mathura region as in the Punjab. However, it should be noted that the Jats formed what modern sociologists call the dominant agricultural caste of the region. A study of the structure of agrarian society during medieval times shows that, in addition to the zamindars, in the day-to-day village life a predominant role was played by castes which may be designated as the dominant agricultural castes. These dominant land-holding casts — such as the Jats and Ahirs in parts of North India, the Marathas and Kolis in western India, and Khammas in the Deccan occupied the largest tracts of land consisting of the best fields in the village, enjoyed land revenue at a traditional i.e., concessional rate, and had many social and fiscal privileges. In Mughal revenue terminology this section was called *khud-kasht* (owner-cultivator), or *riyapati* (privileged), as distinct from the ordinary tenant-cultivators (*muzarian*), and landless labourers and village artisans (*kamin*). This section had often strong links with the zamindars of the area on a caste basis. However, in some areas, such as the Jat area, the zamindars were either Rajputs or Muslims, often appointed by the Mughal Central Government. Thus, the struggle against the Mughal Central Government simultaneously a struggle for ousting and replacing the local non-Jat zamindars. While struggling

for acquiring zamindari rights, the Jats and the *khud-kasht*, generally, were not prepared to let the village untouchables advance to a position of owners of land, even though surplus land may remain fallow.

In certain historical conditions, the *khud-kasht* peasants of the Punjab and the Agra-Mathura region, and the Marathas of the Maharashtra region came into clash with the Mughal Central Government. As a result, they not only raised the slogan of regional independence and religion, but tried to gain zamindari rights and improve their varna status to the position of kshatriyas. This shows the complexity of the medieval social structure, and its overlap with political and religious factors.

The *khud-kasht* or dominant village caste groups have been able to maintain their social position in the village almost intact even to this day, despite many changes, and programmes aimed at the upliftment of the "untouchables" or the scheduled castes. The role of these castes, both in supporting religious revivalism in the name of tradition, and separatism in the name of "self-identity" deserves a careful study.

Thus, India has a definite tradition of state, state formation and state-craft which must be kept in mind while studying the present politics in the country. As we have noted the traditions in turn were not uniform, people in different regions and belonging to different strata perceiving them in different ways, with their own priorities. A careful study of the class interests and motivations of various social classes in India, vis-a-vis the state, taking into account their social ethos, traditions and aspirations, in a word "mentalities" appears more necessary than even in a period of political uncertainty and ideological amorphousness. It can hardly be gainsaid that such a study should, as far as possible, try to rise above existing stereotypes.

LANDLORDS OF CALCUTTA IN THE EARLY COLONIAL PERIOD

Ranjit Sen

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The Legacy of the Mughal Rule

The Mughal rule in Bengal in the eighteenth century did not bring unqualified repose to the landlords of Bengal. From Murshid Quli Khan to Mir-Qasim almost all the Bengal *nawabs* made relentless efforts to increase the means with which they could govern the country and with which they could build up the financial stamina of the state against signs of an all-pervading Mughal decay. Territorial revenue was the main source of income of the state and any effort to maximise the revenue meant squeezing tight the territorial aristocracy of Bengal against their own margin of subsistence. When Murshid Quli Khan placed *amils* over the heads of zamindars in the interior of the country or when Mir Qasim sent Ramnath Bhaduri, the *sazawal*, to Dinajpur to supervise the zamindari there the point was made amply clear that the state required an insight into the hidden treasure of the zamindars. Probe into zamindari potentialities as revenue-paying units of the state was precisely the point with which the English supervisors masquerading under the Mughal title of *amin* was despatched into the districts in 1769. At a slightly later date, in 1772, the plan was finalized to supersede the old landlords, the zamindars, and make terms with farmers who were revenue-contractors having no attachment to the soil. Between 1722 when Murshid Quli Khan introduced his *Mal Zamini* system which placed *amils* over the heads of the zamindars and 1772 when Hastings enunciated his Five-Yearly Farming System which introduced auction-bidders as revenue-farmers the settled phenomenon was that the traditional landlords of Bengal, the ancient territorial aristocracy, was on the wane. It faced competition from outsiders and on many occasions yielded place to them. The territorial aristocracy was undergoing a transformation and as old landlords gave way new landlords filled in their place. This went on over the century so that when the permanent settlement took place it was found that a generation of new landlords no less substantial and consolidated than the old ones was readily available as workable substitutes for the traditional lords of the interior. This was not a change in the zamindari system of Bengal. It was a change in the type of persons the state looked for running zamindaries. Throughout the

*Presented at the inaugural session of Calcutta Tercentenary lectures organised by the Calcutta Historical Society, 5 December 1987.

eighteenth century the government was in quest of a pre-guarantee for revenue and anyone who provided that seemed to be a good partner for any scheme of collaboration the state might envisage. This created a demand for new men and new organization. The Calcutta landlords in the early colonial period grew mostly in response to this demand.

*Origin of early colonial landlords in Calcutta :
The Zamindari of the E. I. Company*

The first of these new landlords to step into the territory of Calcutta was the English East India Company. In 1698 the E. I. Company was allowed to purchase the small taluqdari of Sutanati, Kalikata and Govindapur. This purchase was made in the teeth of local opposition. The Savarna Chaudhuris, the traditional landlords of the place, were against accommodating these new-men from outside. They apprehended loss of territory and consequently loss of revenue. We quote from a recent research on the point :

“The Savarna Raichaudhuri family at Behala/Barisha was promised $\frac{1}{4}$ th part more revenue for Calcutta and the adjacent 2 villages, but the zamindar did not ‘let us have any part of that country in the Right Honourable Company’s name’, because he apprehended ‘that the place will be wholly lost’ to him as ‘we are a powerfull people and that he cannot be possessed of his country againe when he sees the a[o]ccasion’. The zamindar was willing to give the user of the villages to the English in the name of any native because he could take it from any of the Natives that rent any part of his Country at his pleasure”¹

The traditional landlords of Calcutta, the Savarna Chaudhuris, were battling against the current of time. The age had already been ushered in where new-men were to rule. A few years later the Mughal state would brush them aside as sloth and negligent men² because they could not fetch revenue. The English would then come in and say, “we shall be punctuall in paying our rent on the day and att the place appointed, *which jemidars (zamindars) are not always*” (Italics ours).³ Thus as the new landlord of Calcutta the English held before the Mughal state the most sensitive bait, namely revenue and its punctual payment. Revenue was what the Mughals insisted upon⁴ and the traditional landlords persisted in evading. A tribute-hungry state as that of the Mughals would always appreciate what the English as the new landlord of Calcutta had offered to them. This was an effortless point in favour of their most fundamental objective i.e. revenue. Vis-a-vis this vigorous English offer of revenue, the traditional landlords faded out and fifty years later the E. I. Company could well prove its worth as a new and enterprising landlord which could whip up revenue effectively,

Calcutta grows as an estate of the English

It may be said that the colonial landlordism in Calcutta began with the coming of the English as the zamindar of the place. They developed Sutanati, Govindapur and Calcutta as an estate in terms of power and property. In 1699 these three places were worked out as an insulated settlement, "a place where the Moors have nothing to do withall".⁵ Then the incautious phrase came to be used, "our dominion in Bengal".⁶ By 1708-9 when Aurangzeb had died and Murshid Quli Khan was away from Bengal the Calcutta town came to be designated by the English as a "settlement of Great Britain in Calcutta".⁷ With the coming of the English a new kind of landlordism was coming to shape in Calcutta. The lord of the territory was appropriating to itself a kind of territorial sovereignty apparently within the framework of submission to the Mughals but at bottom quite parallel to the Mughal authority.⁸ Kaye narrates what happened in Calcutta about this time. "But we had become by this time [1715] zamindars or landed proprietors, under the Soubahdar of Bengal, and, in this capacity with the consent of the native Government, we had created a criminal court in the neighbourhood of Calcutta for the management of our affairs with the people located upon our estates. The Cutcherry, was fast becoming an English institution. The Company's servants were rising into administrative importance as heaven-born judges and territorial financiers".⁹

*The Nature of Colonial Landlordism as worked out
by the E. I. Company in Calcutta*

In building up Calcutta as an estate of the Company the English seemed to be moved by the concept of landlordism that prevailed in England about this time. There the landlord was the owner of the land. He farmed out lands to the farmer who tilled the lands with the help of hired labours. In Bengal zamindars were never owners of the land. As collectors of rent they were entitled to a share of customary revenue.¹⁰ The English had no concept as to what a Mughal zamindari was. They purchased the talukdari of Calcutta and hence construed it to be a property. They claimed an uninhibited sovereign jurisdiction in Calcutta. This jurisdiction was exercised in many ways. The Nawab's authority on the residents of Calcutta was denied, on the other hand the Company claimed jurisdiction over their run-away subjects.¹¹ Right from the time of Job Charnock they set up their own laws and took upon themselves the right to punish any one who violated the laws.¹² They also set up their own rules as to who should be allowed to settle in the town.¹³ The Mayor's Court set up in 1727 confirmed the judicial right of the English in consistent with the Charter of 1617.¹⁴ Land transfer in Calcutta became

impossible without the prior permission of the English authorities in Calcutta.¹⁵ Even the *Nizamat* could not claim any right on the property of one who resided in Calcutta.¹⁶ Plans were envisaged to build fortifications in Calcutta without the permission of the *Nawab*. Fortification was necessary in order to make Calcutta insulated. An insulated Calcutta would be a sanctuary, not only for the British merchants and residents of the city but also for those who fled from the *Nawab's* territory and took refuge in Calcutta.¹⁷ Thus landlordism in Calcutta took the form of an extraterritoriality and was thus wholly contradistinct to the concept of Mughal zamindari elsewhere.

The Company's landlordism in Calcutta was a kind of territorial sovereignty which was built up from behind a mask.¹⁸ The apparent structure of a Mughal zamindari was maintained in Calcutta but behind it the institutions of a miniature British rule were steadily built up. This was because they wanted to keep off the intervention of the state. If they had their own Council and Mayor's Court, they also had their 'Black Zamindar'. They developed the practice of appointing a zamindar from among the English servants of the Company and he was to be assisted by an Indian with the appellation of 'Black Zamindar'. For example when Holwell was the zamindar Govindaram Mitra was the 'Black Zamindar'. The 'Black Zamindar' was the buffer between the Mughal administration and the Company's rule in Calcutta. Out of this grew the later model of a *naiib-nazim* who maintained the line of demarcation between the defacto and the de jure ruler, the Company and the *Nawab*. The 'Black Zamindar' was indispensable to the Company because it provided a mask to the new sort of landlordism which the English were trying to build up in Calcutta. Hence in the event of a notoriety of the 'Black Zamindar' the system was not dispensed with.

Thus within the framework of a Mughal zamindari Calcutta grew as an estate of the English. It was the nucleus of an enterprising zamindari. The Company's enterprise here was directed to three targets, population, revenue and territory. In 1699 the Court of Directors wrote: "Well knowing that when they shall find the impartiality and mildness of the English Government they will easily be induced to take themselves to your protection, and in short time render the territory within your grant the most flourishing spot of ground in Bengal".¹⁹ The expectation was not belied. In 1706 the population of Calcutta was 22,000. By the middle of the eighteenth century it had increased nearly five times.²⁰ In course of forty years since 1709 the revenue increased by nearly seventy times.²¹ Calcutta was a solvent zamindari²² and thus British landlordism was successful. Revenue and population being full what seemed to be wanting was territory. For nearly sixty years the Company's territory remained at the stand-

still. Frantic attempts were made to purchase 38 villages around Calcutta but all these attempts were thwarted by powerful Bengal *nawabs* like Murshid Quli Khan. Then came the chance in 1757. That year the Company joined the conspiracy against Sirajuddaullah, the *Nawab*. On 18 April, 1757 Scrafton wrote: "Omīr Chand has a very good scheme to procure us a full equivalent for the 38 villages".²³ Two days later the terms of the conspiracy were worked out. The Company promised to maintain 1000 men in the service of Mir Jafar when he became the *Nawab*. In return the Company was promised a grant of territory as far as Culpee.²⁴ C. W. Gurner comments, "The right of compulsory purchase has been transformed into a positive grant of territory in return for military support".²⁵ Thus the brake on Calcutta's territorial expansion was lifted.

Logic of Internal Consolidation

From 1698 to 1757 Calcutta grew virtually as a British estate in Bengal and the Company proved to be a very able and successful landlord, inwardly British, outwardly Mughal. If the Company is considered the first colonial landlord then it is certain that it was a very enterprising landlord and in that it presented a picture of contrast with the ancient territorial aristocrats of Bengal whom Murshid Quli Khan discarded as a host of negligent parasites. New landlords who were being reared in Bengal by the Mughal state as alternative to the older ones were mostly enterprising landlords. Burdwan, Dinajpur and Rajshahi in the first half of the eighteenth century were examples of this sort of progressive landlordism. These zamindari had a kind of territorial dynamism. They absorbed smaller zamindari and became big. This was done under the patronage of the state. Murshid Quli Khan believed that the existence of too many small and petty zamindars would mean interception of revenue at intermediate stages. He wanted to reduce the cost of collection of revenue at the intermediate levels and thereby check the dissipation of revenue at the middlegrade tiers. Therefore, he allowed the substantial and solvent big zamindaris to absorb the defaulting smaller ones.²⁶ As a result of this whichever landlord seemed to be enterprising were allowed by the state to grow with trends of expansion at the cost of others. This territorial dynamism was not allowed to the Company's zamindari in Calcutta. The Company's attempt to maintain its zamindari as an insulated estate and to grow a kind of territorial sovereignty within it was what the Mughal state never liked. Therefore, it resisted all territorial pretensions of the Company and the latter had to remain content with whatever land it came to acquire with the three villages of Sutanati, Govindapur and Kalikata. Denied of this privilege of territorial expansion the Company's estate in Calcutta developed signs of very profound internal consolidations.

Internal consolidation was one thing which distinguished Company's landlordism in Calcutta from other zamindaries in Bengal. In Bengal there were five major zamindaries about this time — Rajshahi, Dinajpur, Nadia, Birbhum and Bishnupur and in Bihar there were three — Tirhut, Sahabad and Tikari. All these zamindaris were the results of agglomerations which were favoured by the state. Thus what we get in British records as 'Capital' zamindaris were nothing but vast sprawling zamindaris. This vastness did not allow the Bengal zamindaris to grow the necessary framework for consolidation. The Rajshahi zamindari, for example, was spread over at least eight *chaklas*²⁷ and "therefore", writes N. K. Sinha, "the local management of the zamindar was subject to the supervision of so many *amils* — intendants of finance — as Grant describes them".²⁸ In such vast zamindaris as these administrative efficiency could not be a normal phenomenon. N. K. Sinha further adds that in the given context of the time smaller zamindaris were more effective than bigger zamindaris²⁹ and it is because of this that smaller zamindaris could not be totally ironed out in spite of the massive policy of zamindari agglomeration so enthusiastically championed by the state.

Fruits of consolidation : Property made inviolable and a Capitalist Class grows

The strength of the Company's zamindaris in Calcutta thus lay in its small size. When the brake on the expansion of the Company's territory was lifted in 1757 by the acquisition of the new lands available in the zamindaris of the 24 *Parganas* the Company's administration came to acquire more knowledge about the internal weaknesses of the Mughal zamindars. In a letter to the Court dated 8 September, 1760, the Company's servants in Calcutta argued that the zamindars around were in the habit of "carrying on long balances and defrauding the government under various pretences". Out of this grew the Company's tendency to stimulate new men, merchants and banians, as revenue farmers, first around Calcutta and then into the interior of the country. When the lands in the 24 *Parganas* were farmed out in 1757 it was found that twelve Calcutta banians had become farmers.³⁰ The Company wanted a pre-guarantee of revenue. But that was not possible in the existing milieu of the time. Therefore, it introduced moneyed and substantial men in the work of revenue management. One aspect of the consolidation of the Company's landlordism in Calcutta was to bring about situations where substantial men could flourish. This was done by creating a new concept of property. The Company's administration was successful in creating conditions where property was considered to be inviolable.³¹ It has already been pointed out that in 1755 the Company's administration resisted the effort made by the *Nawab* to grab the property of three men in Calcutta — Lacchi,

Radhanath and Gossin Sen — who died without any male heir. On another occasion when the *Nawab* sent “peons with peremptory parwana to deliver up the effects of Kanhaiya and Sacher . . .” the Company’s administration replied: . . . “we cannot think of subjecting our flag and protection to so much contempt as to abandon our tenants and inhabitants and permit their estates and properties to be siezed and plundered”.⁸² Once this principle was stated the Company could hold out the threat to the *Nawab*. “. . . in case this demand is not laid aside we shall be under necessity to withdraw our factory and take proper measure to secure our employees from these impositions”.⁸³ In protecting the property of the inhabitants of Calcutta the merchant-zamindar, the Company, could hold out threats to the *Nawabi* government which the other zamindars could not. During the time of Murshid Quli Khan a Sitaram (the zamindar of Jessore) and an Udainarain (zamindar of Rajshahi) were chastised after having shown threat to the government. In the case of the English zamindari in Calcutta reprisal could not be in the Mughal contemplation. The English were one of the largest importers of bullion and since Bengal was a bullion-scarce country⁸⁴ the Bengal *Nawabs* valued the presence of the English and other European Companies in Bengal as a welcome phenomenon. That apart the English might had already appeared in the country as an important balancer in power adjustments⁸⁵ and when Bengal was already in the throes of turmoil⁸⁶ the *Nawab* of Bengal did not think it wise to put matters to the arbitrament of swords.

Thus the English were successful in working out in Calcutta the concept of the inviolability of property. In course of the eighteenth century accumulation of wealth at any level below the *Nawab* was becoming a risky proposition. The *nawab* government was under the stress of a capital-short economy and consequently the fiscal pressure of the state was steadily descending upon the zamindars of the country.⁸⁷ To escape the predatory fiscal pressures of the *Nawabs* the Rajas of the interior began to accumulate wealth in Calcutta.⁸⁸ This was a new phenomenon. The banians and the merchants were not the only people who consigned their treasure in Calcutta. Those who ruled the interior had also begun to appreciate the importance of an insulated city as a place where treasures could be piled up behind the notice of the state. This importance of Calcutta as a depository of wealth did not escape the eyes of Warren Hastings who worked out the scheme of making Calcutta the capital of British Bengal.⁸⁹ In a letter to the Court dated 3 November, 1773 he dwelt on the importance of the English rule in Calcutta thus: “Another good consequence will be the great increase of inhabitants and of wealth in Calcutta . . .”. The wealth Hastings was speaking of came partly from trade⁴⁰ and partly from the accumulation of wealth by the interior Rajas. Even the Company’s own servants spread out into the interior in search of wealth⁴¹ and that

wealth was brought to Calcutta. The most important phenomenon in the history of Calcutta in the eighteenth century was a rise of a capitalist class. This class had two components. On the one hand there were those "city capitalists who had made their fortune as partners of British private traders in Calcutta".⁴² On the other there were men "like Govindram Mitra, Nabakrishna, Gangagobind Sinha" whom N. K. Sinha called 'adventurers' who "made their money not by trade but by other means, in close association with their masters".⁴³ The accumulated wealth in the hands of these new men in Calcutta was perhaps greater than that in the rest of Bengal".⁴⁴ To this group belonged such men as Raghu Mitra, Kasiram Mitra, Bonomali Sarkar, Manik Babu, Madan Datta, Toonoo Babu, Gokul Babu, Sobharam Basak, and others⁴⁵ who were connected with the English as their trading agents. Coexisted with them Gokul Ghosal, Gangagovinda Sinha and others who collaborated with the English as a power elite and revenue-administrators.⁴⁶ It was they who constructed buildings, purchased gardens, built up *ghats*⁴⁷ and thus stimulated the promotional activities of Calcutta.

Calcutta Capitalists Spread into the Interior

The unilateral movement of wealth from the interior of Bengal to Calcutta was a phenomenon of the first half of the eighteenth century. A new capitalist class was then in the offing in Calcutta under the protective wing of the Company's zamindari. In the second half of the eighteenth century this class felt itself competent enough to spread out into the interior. "The new power of money", writes N. K. Sinha, "was not felt in villages in the fifties and sixties of the eighteenth century. But about the close of the eighteenth century its intrusion was also being felt by people in rural areas".⁴⁸ The process had steadily begun in the early part of the second half of the eighteenth century. The recurring famines⁴⁹ and the wars of Mir Qasim had wiped out a generation of administrators. In the interior the old zamindars were hostile to the English and the Company's administration felt the need of men of knowledge and money who could open the interior to the English. The banians and merchants, the agents of the Company and its servants were readily available in Calcutta and they were pushed into the interior. Thus when the Five Yearly Farming system was introduced in Bengal in 1772 "Durgacharan Mitra, a Calcutta banian, became a partner of the Purnea farm of Huzuri Mal and Madan Datta. As he was going to Rungpore via Purnea he was asked to make new arrangements for revenue collections. He brought two hundred people with him from Calcutta to these parganas and turned out the inferior and petty servants collecting rents from ryots".⁵⁰ In Midnapur Santiram Sinha, the brother of Gangagovinda Sinha, the Dewan of the Calcutta Committee, was made the security of innumerable farms. He was

the security of the Mahmudshahi farm of Jessore and the farm was mis-managed. The competent research of N. K. Sinha has yielded the point that over a wide part of Bengal, in Hughli, Hijli, Mahisadal, Tamluk, Jessore, Mahmudshahi etc. "the farmers were normally prominent Calcutta banians".⁵¹ The Company's zamindari in Calcutta not only brought about a capital concentration in the city it also reared a host of capitalists who could move into the interior and take over the management of revenue there and in the process help the Company in ripping out the sources of the hidden wealth in the interior. The spreading out of the rich men of Calcutta into the districts began in the sixties and the seventies of the eighteenth century and it continued well after the Permanent Settlement. In every district in Bengal in the decade of seventies collaborators from Calcutta were available⁵² and it was they who aspired to take over the revenue management of the country from the old zamindars.

Genesis of Calcutta Zamindars

What we come to know as the Calcutta zamindars in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century had emerged out of this class of people. The representative specimen of the emerging landlords was the Ghosals of Calcutta. One of the early members of the family, Gokul Ghosal, was a banian under Verelst. With the help of his master he secured the farm of Polospoy in 1769 on a stipulated revenue of Rs. 4,11,321. The same year he farmed a pargana in Burdwan against an agreed sum of Rs. 1,04,444. About the same time he secured the very important farm of Chandrakona. "These farms were given to Gokul Ghosal for his services in Calcutta lands . . ."⁵³ When after 1757 the brake on the territorial expansion of the Company's zamindari was lifted it was men like Gokul Ghosal who helped the English unfold the intricacies of the Mughal revenue system here. The growth of new landlord houses in Calcutta and around was thus the direct result of this collaboration. Gokul was the dewan of Chittagong when in the sixties Verelst was the chief there. For the service there he was allowed to farm extensive tracts in Sandwip. Gokul's brother Kandarpa Ghosal served as a banian under Mr. Shakespeare and acquired extensive property.⁵⁴

Thus the picture seems to be complete. The Company grew Calcutta as an insulated estate of the English. Property was made there inviolable and hence capital was siphoned there from the interior. A new class of capitalists grew in the city and in the second half of the eighteenth century this class was used as instruments for taking over managements of the zamindari of the countryside. Hence impulse was given to them to spread out into the interior. Situations were already made ripe for the expansion of the capitalists of Calcutta. The tremendous fiscal squeeze of the Com-

pany as the *diwan* of the country had led to the pauperization of the interior zamindars.⁵⁵ The replacement of Murshidabad as the capital of Bengal by Calcutta created conditions in which capital flowed into southern Bengal particularly into places around Calcutta and the whole of northern Bengal came to be starved of finance.⁵⁶ In this situation the Calcutta capitalists were let loose on the countryside. The new Calcutta landlords of Paikpara and Bhukailash flourished in this situation. Jadunath Sarkar spoke of a class of new landlords whom the Mughal state reared at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Firminger and N. K. Sinha speak of yet another set of new zamindars⁵⁷ who were brought up in Calcutta and then allowed to spread out into the interior after the battle of Palasi. The eighteenth century starts with the picture of the waning of the ancient aristocracy in Bengal, like the Savarna Chaudhuries of Barisha. The eighteenth century ends with the picture of the consolidation of a class of capitalist zamindars, like the Sinhas of Paikpara and Kandi or the Ghosals of Sandwip, Dacca-Jalalpur and Bhukailash near Calcutta. Wherever in the interior old zamindars showed signs of decline men of opulence rushed from Calcutta to fill in the void there. The process continued for long but the hey days of these new and rising zamindars certainly synchronized with the first quarter of a century that formed the aftermath of the Permanent Settlement. At the one end of this process of the emergence of new zamindars we have the Ghosals and the Sinhas and at the other there were the families like the Tagores who as late as 1812 took over the Idilpur zamindari (in Dacca-Jalalpur) from the Kayastha zamindar of the place or in 1819 purchased the large zamindari of Tappa Nazirpur (also in Dacca-Jalalpur) from a Muslim family of great antiquity.⁵⁸ The process came to a fulfilment around the thirties of the nineteenth century so that the final assessment of the situation could be made by James Mill in 1831 in the following words: "To a very great degree the original possessors in Bengal have, from their own improvidence and other causes lost their estates. Few of the old zamindars now exist. The men who hold the property are not resident; they are capitalists who reside in the towns and manage by their agents".⁵⁹

Calcutta Landlords create absentee landlordism in the interior

The Calcutta capitalists spread out into the interior to create a system of absentee landlordism. The Calcutta purchasers of zamindaris never saw their tenants. Even their agents had little intercourse with them".⁶⁰ Gokul Ghosal were given farms in the interior "for his services in Calcutta lands where his attention to public business had been one means of the neglect of his private affairs. This big Burdwan farmer (Gokul Ghosal), a prominent Calcutta banian, later defaulted".⁶¹ The Ghosals held a substantial part of the zamindari of Selimabad which they obtained by displacing the

old zamindars, the Rais of Raikati. As an absentee landlord they mismanaged the farm and later "being in need of cash and not receiving regular remittances from the manager, took to selling the office of the manager every year to the highest bidder. Thus, each year the manager was changed and the new manager, holding his tenure for only one year, practised every kind of oppression on the raiyats".⁶² Beveridge while writing on the district of Bakarganj seemed to be struck by the conditions the district had been moved into by its absentee landlords. These landlords were the *Nawabs* of Dacca, the Tagores of Calcutta and the Ghosals of Bhukailash. They had never set their feet in the district.⁶³ Absentee landlordism was a part of colonial landlordism.

Calcutta Zamindars thwarted in the interior

In any case, the landlords who were bred in Calcutta could not eventually make much headway in the districts. They had the license to spread into the districts but there they were thwarted by the internal men of the zamindaris. About the penetration of the Calcutta capitalists and landlords in Burdwan Ratnalekha Ray makes the following observation: "Capitalists from Calcutta were by no means prominent among the purchasers, although many of them worked in the capacity of sezawals (attaching managers on behalf of the government), sadr mustajirs and farmers under the Raja of Burdwan. Nearly two-thirds of the rights sold (74.99 per cent) circulated among the inhabitants residing within the districts of Burdwan and Hugli, both of which were included in the zamindari of Burdwan. Purchase made by inhabitants of other districts were practically negligible (3.88 per cent)".⁶⁴ In Dinajpur Ratnalekha finds the Calcutta capitalists to be absolutely nowhere: "Yet the strange fact was that neither the Murshidabad bankers, nor Baranasi Ghose and Darpanarayan Tagore, figure among the new purchasers of the Dinajpur Raj. Transfer of properties under the operation of the Permanent settlement failed to revolutionize the rural society of Dinajpur as it took place largely within the classes which already lived off the land. The new bourgeoisie which seemed to be emerging in Calcutta failed to establish its hold on the agrarian society of Dinajpur. Although 74.24 per cent of the revenue-collecting rights in Dinajpur were sold, only 4.46 per cent of these properties are known to have passed into the hands of men of capital from Calcutta".⁶⁵ In the final analysis, Ratnalekha concludes: "It must not be supposed that it was the invariable practice of all men of capital in Calcutta to invest their money in zamindari properties in the interior".⁶⁶ Calcutta capitalists had money but they were weak in their understanding of the land control system in the interior. Hence their penetration in the local land control system was not as great as it has been imagined.⁶⁷

Calcutta Zamindars turn to real estate-owning

If revenue-collecting rights were not easy as avenues where capital could be invested then where did the Calcutta capitalists and landlords invest their money? It was certainly in the purchase of the real estates lands, buildings, gardens, ponds and bazars in and around Calcutta.^{67a} "The wills and inventories of men of substance in Calcutta and other towns between 1763 and 1850, preserved in the old record room of the High Court of Calcutta, show that the main form in which these men invested their capital was urban house and ground property and not revenue-bearing or rent-free landed estates".⁶⁸ In olden times the banians and merchants amassed money over their contacts with the Europeans and "with this capital", declared the Vakil of Jainarain Ghosāl, "he (Jainarain and men of his sort) entered largely into trade and various other concerns . . . as is the custom among those whose profession is to lend money".⁶⁹ Now this class gave up their entrepreneurial activities and settled as zamindars. "Once these families", writes Ratnalekha, "became established zamindars and gave up their entrepreneurial activities, they indulged in repeated buying and selling of landed properties, which became the main field of investment of their profits from land". This is the irony and tragedy of Bengal's history that a class of capitalists who grew up on their own efforts were made to give up their entrepreneurial activities and waste their money and talents on idle living on real estate management. "This class of people withdrew from commercial enterprise and became owners of Calcutta house property and landowners in rural areas".⁷⁰ This is how the dynamism of a rising capitalist class was contained. The colonial landlordism of the East India Company in Calcutta was successful in keeping the entrepreneurial enterprise of a very substantial class of people confined within the boundaries of revenue management. But revenue management was not the field where they could find their own validity. The old zamindars and men of the interior who had fallen victims to the fiscal squeeze of the Company still retained their own leadership and it was difficult to dislodge them from their traditional world. Thus the capitalist class formed the bulk of the Calcutta landlords in the second half of the eighteenth century invested their wealth in unproductive purchase of urban property and eventually became vast landowners within the city and outside its periphery.

It will be worthwhile here to discuss the nature and size of the property which some of the early capitalists of Calcutta possessed. Gokul Ghosal who died in 1779 left a property worth Rs. 6,00,687. "Out of this the urban (including some low-value suburban property) properties account for Rs. 3,26,902".⁷¹ "Sobharam Basak, the successful mid-eighteenth century merchant, had thirty-seven houses mainly in Burrabazar, besides

ponds and gardens in central and north Calcutta. When Ramdulal De died in 1825 he left houses and landed properties worth about five lakhs in Calcutta, yielding an annual rent of about twenty-five thousand rupees.^{71a} The Sinha family of Jorasanko had land and houses worth more than eight lakhs in 1820. Dwarkanath Tagore, the successful early 19th century Bengali businessman, had made substantial investment in houses and land in Calcutta and the neighbourhood".⁷²

Ratnalekha Ray's research, quoted above, makes the point clear that the new landed aristocrats of Calcutta could not make much headway in the interior of the country being thwarted there by the traditional landlords and their own men.⁷³ Repulsed in the countryside they turned to urban landholding. This how one can utilize the fruits of Ratnalekha's research to explain why the Calcutta capitalists in the second half of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century began to acquire more and more real property in the city. Pradip Sinha provides an altogether different explanation for the phenomenon. He thinks that the new concept of property, which grew up about this time was at the root of this development. "The hectic building activity and land purchase in Calcutta from the mid-18th to the early 19th century must have stemmed from a relatively new notion of real property".⁷⁴

Bazar: The focus of urban growth

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What Pradip Sinha calls a 'real property' was essentially a bazar-oriented property. "The bazar had become the focus of a large part of the urban area".⁷⁵ "The impulse of the bazar combined with comprador economic and social activity. The compradors, that is, the dewans and banians representing the upper echelons of a large body of intermediaries, lifted a basically bazar town to a further stage of development".⁷⁶ "The prized possessions were bazars and tenanted land (bustee)".⁷⁷ Thus Pradip Sinha makes clear the importance of bazars in Calcutta as the parameter for understanding the growth of Calcutta and its landlords. Finally he concludes: "The Comprador purchased land and settled it with tenants. Rent was his primary concern".⁷⁸ The psychology for rent stimulation was essentially an inherited psychology — inherited from the rule of the Company as the zamindar of Calcutta.⁷⁹ Ever since the acquisition of Calcutta as a zamindari the main drive of the Company was towards stimulating revenue. This psychology was steadily instilled in the veins of all other zamindars who were reared in Calcutta. The colonial landlordism which grew with Calcutta as its nucleus was essentially revenue-hungry landlordism. Lands were purchased in and around Calcutta, jungles were cleared and an inhabitation was arranged with an immediate eye on revenue. "Land was cleared so that it could yield immediate income. The

landlord himself had no conception of the opulent or middle class residential area. The houses of the opulent 'comprador-landlord-rajahs' would be surrounded with huts or embedded in slums. There would be a tendency to maximise the rent income by appropriating available open space or former gardens . . . for the erection of huts".⁸⁰ This process of purchase of land, settling it with people and securing a revenue yield from it was made clear by Dewan Kashinath in one of his petition to the government: "I am desirous of increasing its cultivation and peopling it with shop-keepers and others I will invite to settle in it".⁸¹

Village : The model of town-growth

The city of Calcutta which thus emerged under the supervision of the Calcutta landlords was no better than a cluster of villages, "The 'comprador-rajahs', acting at a socio-cultural level emphasised an image of the city which was not far removed from the image of rival villages. The intensity of rivalry between different social factions tended to strengthen the image. In fact, the 'villages' were getting steadily mixed up, though the image of the 'village' often survived, reflecting a lag in the consciousness where the reality had changed".⁸² "Most of the urban landlord families of Calcutta claim to be descended from the 'jungle clearing inhabitants' of Calcutta. This is an expression of the reality of the 'talukdari patta' — the rural landlord's title deed — repeated in an altogether different setting. The net effect of the extension of this reality was the crowding of urban space for the rent income of the urban landlord".⁸³ There was an intense competition among the different landlord families to take the largest share of this rent income of the urban space. Every landlord had its own way of growing the area under its control and the pattern which eventually evolved did not take the city beyond traditional mould of *tola*, *tuli*, *para*, *bazar*, which seemed to be superbly nostalgic of the rural settings from which patterns of habitation and life had been transplanted to an urban setting. In such a situation urbanisation could not be a complete process and very often brick-built buildings had to coexist with mud-built houses.⁸⁴ At least the Bengal village could not be totally wiped out from the face of the city. The village was writ large in its heart.

It thus appears in the final analysis that the Calcutta landlords could not lift the city from the archetypal model of a well-nourished village. It was not their individual failure. It was their failure as a class. Irfan Habib once said that empire-building had never been the achievement of Indian zamindars, either as a class or as an individual.⁸⁵ In the same vein one may say that town-building and town-planning had never been the work of Indian landlords. The reason why the Calcutta landlords could not move beyond the bounds of a tradition bound village-society was that they had

no autonomy. Within the framework of the colonial zamindari of the Company in Calcutta autonomy was absent. The Calcutta landlords, the early compradors of the country, could not develop the traits of the Western bourgeoisie. Marx said in a competent passage that the bourgeoisie "has made the country dependent on the towns". The Calcutta landlords were essentially compradors and hence could not develop like the bourgeoisie of the West the impulse to grow as an unfettered class which was at the root of the growth of the Western towns.⁸⁶ Impulse for autonomy and freedom was not commonplace in Indian milieu. In the absence of this Calcutta landlords remained quarantined within the settings of villages which had given rise to them and in the greatest of their hey days they could not look beyond the villages which they themselves had built in the urban space of Calcutta. In the conclusion one may thus say that the story of the Calcutta landlords in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century was essentially a story of frustration. A class grew of its own accord, built up its substantial managerial abilities and competence of finance and made themselves in height equal with their colonial masters, but unfortunately were made to remain shut in the blind alleys of growth where their last aim was to be the masters of real estates which were productive in their immediate aim of securing an income, but were equally unproductive in a long-term appreciation of the right investment of finance.

1. P. Thankappan Nair, *Calcutta In The Seventeenth Century*, pp. 350-51.

2. During the first quarter of the eighteenth century when Murshid Quli Khan was introducing his revenue reforms he found that the old landlords were weak and ineffectual and hence he entertained a set of new men who eventually settled as the landlords of the country. Here is Jadunath Sarkar on the point: "Before this (Murshid Quli's reforms) the State used to get its dues from the land in the lump, from the old landed proprietors of Bengal, called zamindars. Some of them were decayed scions of old Hindu ruling houses, but most were the descendants of the hereditary local officials and barons of the old Hindu and Muslim dynasties of the days before the coming of Mughal sovereignty. Like all aristocracies, these men had now fallen into indolence, negligence, and improvidence, and the State could have no certainty of collection or regularity of income from the land if the old zamindars continued in charge of it. The direct collection of land-rent from the actual cultivators by State officials, which prevailed in Upper India under Todar Mal's *zabti* system, was impossible in Bengal. Hence Murshid Quli began to collect the land revenue through *ijara-dara* or contractors, like the *fermiers generals* of France, by taking security bonds from them. This was the *mal zamini* system. Many of the older zamindars remained but under the thumbs of these new *ijara-dars*, and in time they were crushed out of existence. In the second or third generation, these contractors came to be called zamindars and many of them were dignified with the title of Rajas and Maharajas, though not of princely birth, but merely glorified civil servants paid by a percentage on their collections" ... Jadunath Sarkar ed. *The History of Bengal*, vol. II, University of Dacca, Second Impression, 1972, p. 409. ,

3. This was the brief which the Surman Embassy placed before Emperor Furrukh Siyar. For details see *Wilson's Early Annals*, II, II Appendix, pp. 276-78.

4. For the Mughal method of revenue maximisation in Bengal see Ranjit Sen's forthcoming book *Economics of Revenue Maximisation in Bengal*.
5. Wilson, *Old Fort William in Bengal*, I, p. 40.
6. Wilson, *Old Fort William in Bengal*, I, p. 48.
7. Abdul Karim, *Murshid Quli Khan, and His Times*, p. 136.
8. For details see Ranjit Sen, *Metamorphosis of the Bengal Polity*, Ch. II.
9. John William Kaye, *The Administration of the East India Company* (An Indian Reprint), Allahabad, 1966, pp. 76-77.
10. "Englishmen in the eighteenth century were familiar only with the English land system, under which the soil belonged to landlords, was let to farmers and was tilled by labourers. The Bengal system was entirely different, and the contending claims put forward from time to time by the State, by the landlords or zamindars, and by the cultivators or Ryots, obscured for a long time the real features of the institution. The State was in no sense the proprietor, but was only entitled to a *revenue* from the soil. The Zamindars held their estates from generation to generation, were virtually feudal lords armed with civil and criminal powers, and were entitled to customary *rents* from the cultivators. The cultivators or Ryots were not mere labourers, but had rights to their holdings, which they transmitted from father to son, paying the customary rents to the landlords. Occasionally the Nawabs of Bengal resurveyed the estates and enhanced the revenues, occasionally Zemindars increased their rents, but, nevertheless through long centuries the arrangements remained unchanged in their main features. The State was entitled to a revenue, the Zemindars were entitled to customary rents, paying a revenue to the State, the Ryots had a hereditary right to their holdings, subject to payment of customary rents to landlords" . Romesh Dutt, *The Economic History of India*, Vol. I, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1963, pp. 37-38.
11. An example will make the point clear. In 1709 Nandaram, a tax collector of Calcutta, fled to Hugli. The English claimed jurisdiction over their run-away subjects. The *faujdar* of Hugli had to hand over this man to the Company. The *Nawab's* authority on him was not recognized. It is vital to note that the Company got their *talukdari* of Calcutta only about a decade ago and within this short time they developed their total authority over their subjects although Abdul Karim points out that "the English had not yet received from the emperor any right over their run-away servants" (Abdul Karim, *Murshid Quli Khan and His Times*, p. 138). For details see Ranjit Sen *Metamorphosis of the Bengal Polity*, ch. II, specially section 3 starting at p. 59.
12. "Mr. Channock [Charnock] ... reigned [in Calcutta] more absolute than a Raja, ... for when any poor ignorant native transgressed his laws, they were sure to undergo a severe whipping for a penalty ..." ... Alexander Hamilton's description in Talboys Wheeler, *Early Records of British India: A History of the English Settlement in India*, p. 189. Also see P. Thankappan Nair *Calcutta in the 18th Century, Impressions of Travellers*, Calcutta, 1984, p. 5.
- "They [the English] administered their own justice in Calcutta, 'laying hold' of their Indian debtors and carrying them into the settlement whenever possible, a practice 'tacitly allowed and countenanced' by the Nawabs' officials" ... P. J. Marshall, *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the Eighteenth Century*. Marshall makes this observation on the basis of the 7th Report, Secret Committee of the House of Commons, 1773; *Reports from Committees of the House of Commons* (1803-6), iv, 325. For details see Ranjit Sen, *Op. Cit.*, ch. ii.
13. "The East India Company was generally cautious in admitting new settlers in Calcutta ... It did not allow men of suspicious and questionable character to settle in Calcutta" — S. Bhattacharyya, *The East India Company and the Economy of Bengal*, p. 188.

14. Percival Spear, *The Nabobs*, Note 17 p. 149. The Mayor's Court remained in being until 1774. This court consisted of a Mayor and nine Aldermen who were appointed to act as judges in civil cases. See P. J. Marshall, *Op. Cit.*, p. 26 and W. K. Firminger, *Historical Introduction to the Bengal Portion of the Fifth Report*, Indian Studies: Past & Present, Ch. V. entitled "The Mayor's Court", starting at p. 92.

15. In 1785 the Company resolved that no land would be "sold in future without the permission of the Board" ... S. Bhattacharya, *Op. Cit.*, p. 189.

16. In 1755 three men in Calcutta Laochi, Radhanath and Gossin Sen died without any male issue. The *Nawab* demanded their property. The Council rejected the demand on the ground that they were "under the protection of the English" ... Brijen Gupta, *Sirajuddaullah and the East India Company*, p. 38.

17. The flight of Krishnadas, the son of Rajballabh, to Calcutta during the reign of Siraj is a case in point. Siraj levelled against the English the charge that they were protecting "persons who had accounts with the Padshah" ... Hill, *Bengal in 1756-57* I, p. 196. For details see Ranjit Sen, *Op. Cit.*, Ch. II.

18. The concept of this British 'mask' was explained many years later by Clive. In 1767 he wrote to the Select Committee "Nothing remains to him [the *Nawab*] but the name and shadow of authority. This name, however, this shadow, it is indispensably necessary that we should venerate ... to do any act by any exertion of the English power, which can equally be done by the nabob at our instance, would be throwing off the mask, would be declaring the Company Soubah of the Province".

19. Wilson, *Old Fort William*, I, p. 37.

20. See Ranjit Sen, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 54-55. There has been great speculation on the size of Calcutta's population in the eighteenth century. "As early as 1730 one observer guessed that it might contain 300,000 people, and another was prepared to hazard 400,000 by 1750: 600,000 has been suggested for the end of the century. These estimates are no doubt grossly over-inflated, but a critical reduction of them to 120,000 for 1750 is still a very striking figure" ... P. J. Marshall, *East India Fortunes*, p. 24.

21. The net revenue in 1709 was Rs. 1,532. In August 1714 it rose to Rs. 2,705. In 1717 it was Rs. 11,071 and finally in 1754 it amounted to Rs. 107,131. See Ranjit Sen, *Op. Cit.*, p. 54.

22. Calcutta's solvency did not escape the notice of the state. In 1726 the state demand on the Calcutta zamindari was Rs. 44,000. Ten years later, in 1736, it was Rs. 55,000; finally in 1754 it was Rs. 3,00,000. On these occasions the English compromised by paying the following sum: Rs. 20,000, Rs. 55,000 and Rs. 85,000 respectively.

23. Hill, *Bengal in 1756-57*, Vol. II, p. 343.

24. Hill, *Op. Cit.*, p. 349.

25. C. W. Gurner, *The Merchant Zamindars*, II, *Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. XXIX, Pt. II, Serial No. 58, April-June, 1925, p. 163.

26. "Murshid Quli Khan also encouraged the formation of big zamindaris. Under him half of the land revenue of Bengal was paid by six large zamindars. He thus sought to simplify the operation of land revenue collection with a few big landholders. Raghunandan, 'his most trusted counsellor in revenue matters' was encouraged by him to form the zamindari of Rajshahi by an agglomeration of many separate lapsed estates" ... N. K. Sinha, *The Economic History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 17.

27. *Chaklas* were administrative divisions. "In his final revenue settlement, Murshid Quli divided the entire land of Bengal into 13 circles (*Chaklas*) which were subdivided into thirteen tracts under collection by Jagirdars and twenty-five areas reserved as khalsa (Crownland) farmed out to contractors" ... Jadunath Sarkar ed. *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 414.

28. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 17.

29. "It was admitted by the early British administrators that the smaller zamindars and

talukdars were generally quite efficient. The charge of incapacity could be made against the big zamindars" ... N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

30. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 24.

31. "Such men (people of Calcutta) seem to have found in the Company's government, for all its obvious faults, a respect for the rights of property which made Calcutta a relatively attractive place to live in compared to cities under the protection of the Nawabs of Bengal" ... P. J. Marshall, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 27-28.

32. Fort William Council to the Court of Directors, 23 February, 1756.

33. *Ibid.*

34. One of the main reasons for bullion scarcity was the drain of specie to Delhi. "As the King's revenue and other money are annually sent to the Mogul's Court at Delhi, the money is sent in new coined siuca rupees; therefore not only the bullion, but also, the rupees of other provinces imported into Bengal in course of trade, are every year new coined in the Bengal mint; and this sweeps away almost all the silver, coined or uncoined which comes into Bengal; it goes to Delhi from whence it never returns to Bengal, so that after such treasure is gone from Muxadabad there is hardly currency enough in Bengal to carry on any trade, or even to go market for provisions or necessaries of life, till the next shipping arrives to bring fresh supply of silver" ... Mandevile's letter dated 27 November, 1750 available in Sir James Steuart, *Principles of Monay*, p. 63.

35. For details see Ranjit Sen, *Metamorphosis of the Bengal Polity*, pp 55-56.

36. Bengal in the middle of the eighteenth century was locked by Maratha invasions and Afghan insurrection.

37. The nature of the fiscal pressure has thus been described by Sraffton: "... the Mahometan governors look on the growing riches of a subject as a boy does on a bird's nest; he eyes their progress with impatience, then comes with a spoiler's hand, and ravishes the fruit of their labour. To counter-act this, the Gentoos bury their money under ground, often with such secrecy as not to trust even their own children with the knowledge of it; and then it is amazing to see what they will suffer rather than betray it: When their tyrants have tried all manner of corporal punishments on them, they threaten to defile them; but even that often fails; for resentment prevailing over the love of life, they frequently rip up their bowels, or poison themselves, and carry the secret to the grave; and the sums lost in this manner, in some measure account why the silver in India not appear to increase, tho' there are such quantities continually coming into the kingdom, and nothing going out" ... Sraffton, *Reflections on the Government etc. of Indostan*, reprinted in Calcutta, 1875, under the title *A History of Bengal before and after the Plassey*, p. 16.

38. Sraffton, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 56-57 says that Siraj's invasion of Calcutta was motivated by the "notion, that all the Rajahs and great men kept their riches in Calcutta". It will be worth-while to note here that Krishnadas, the son of Raja Rajballabh escaped to Calcutta with huge treasure.

39. "In transferring from Murshidabad to Calcutta the seat of the Supreme Courts of Justice, the head seat of revenue administration and the Khalsa, Hastings was instituting a policy deliberately designed to make the last named place the capital of British Bengal. If Job Charnock is to be considered the founder of Calcutta as a seat of trade, Hastings may be regarded as the founder of Calcutta as the political capital of British Empire" ... Firminger, *Fifth Report*, p. 233

40. The following table available in the proceedings of the G.G. in Council, dated 22 April, 1775, shows Calcutta's income from Customs House collections during 1769-74:

CALCUTTA CUSTOMS HOUSE COLLECTION

Year	Gross Duties	Net Duties	Paid into the Treasury
	Current Rs. A. P.	C. Rs. A. P.	C Rs A. P.
1769	2,62,765-12-8	2,87,960-12-6	2,24,806- 5-8
1770	1,46,801- 1-6	1,20,084- 4-6	1,44,901- 5-6

1771	2,06,166- 6-3	1,88,526-13-3	2,01,650-13-6
1772	2,34,792- 5-6	2,05-515- 4-9	3,07,542- 0-0
1773	3,39,484-12-3	3,04,818-11-3	3,06,192- 0-0
1774	4,41,045- 2-9	4,00,966-12-9	4,08,992-15-6

Calcutta Customs House, The 1st January, 1775.

41. Gleig in his *Memory of the Life of the Rt. Hon. Warren Hastings*, Vol. 1, pp. 268-69. Quoted Hastings' letter to J. Dupre dated 6 January, 1773 where Hastings observed: "For who would rest satisfied with a handsome salary of three or four thousand rupees a year to maintain in Calcutta, who could get a lack or three lacks, which I believe have been acquired in that, and live at no expense in the districts?"

42. N. K. Sinha, *Economic History of Bengal*, Vol. II, p. 222.

43. *Ibid.*

44. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 223.

45. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 222.

46. For details see Ranjit Sen, *New Elite and New Collaboration*, Calcutta, 1985.

47. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 222.

48. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 196.

49. There were famines in Calcutta in the forties, fifties, sixties and seventies and eighties of the eighteenth century. See Ranjit Sen, *Calcutta in the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. I, Ch. II.

50. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 76.

51. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 78.

52. A few examples are given below :

- (a) Forty-two parganas of Midnapur were handed over to the Governor's banian Krishnakanta Nandi of Kasimbazar (See the *Prodgs. of the G. G. in Council* (revenue), Vol. 20.
- (b) Kasinath Babu, a banian of Calcutta secured two parganas. Thus out of 57 parganas of Midnapur 44 parganas were in the hands of the Calcutta banians.
- (c) In Purnea Huzuri Mal, Madan Datta and Durgacharan Mitra took over considerable farms.
- (d) In Mahmudshahi Santiram Sinha, the brother of Gangagobinda Sinha was the security of the farmer. When the farmer defaulted he became both the farmer and the security. The zamindar became a *kutkinadar* under him.
- (e) In Sylhet Raghu Mullick, the banian of Thackeray, was entrusted with the task of collecting rent.
- (f) The paraganas of Seroopoor in Rungpur was purchased by Darpanarain Tagore of Calcutta in a public sale on the eve of the Permanent Settlement.
- (g) In the eighties of the eighteenth century Jainarain Ghosal, the nephew of Gokul Ghosal, lent money to Damodar Singh, the zamindar of Bishnupur. In satisfaction of his claims he tried to take over the Bhitarijote Mahals. But he was not successful (See *Prodgs. of Board of Revenue*, 2 Nov., 1787. No. 40 and *Prodgs.* dated 25 March, 1788, No. 19, Petitions of Jainarain Ghosal).
- (h) Three Calcutta capitalists Durgacharan Pakrashi, Kasinath babu and Biswanath Banerjee purchased Bishnupur mahals in public auction.
- (i) In 1789 Kashinath babu, the Khatri banian of Calcutta who was originally the security of the Raja of Midnapur, Sundarnarayan, purchased from him 75 villages bearing an assessment of Rs. 27,550.
- (j) When Raja Baidyanath of Dinajpur bequeathed to Radhanath a debt of Rs. 3 lakhs it was found that the two of the four principal claimants were Baranasi Ghose and Darpanarain Tagore of Calcutta (See *Dinajpur Dist. Recds.* No. 143, Collector to BOR, dt. 13 May, 1787, p. 83).

- (k) On the eve of the Permanent Settlement the Ghosals of Calcutta held a large part of the zamindari of Dacca-Jalalpur (See Ratnalekha Ray, *Change in Bengal Agrarian Society*, p. 229; N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 25, 30, 222, 223; Pradip Sinha, *Calcutta in the Urban History*, pp. 144-47.
- (l) Durgacharan Pakrashi, a capitalist of Calcutta purchased pargana Karisunda in Burdwan in public sale.
53. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 30.
54. In the Prods. of G. G in Council (Revenue), Vol. 86 some information is available about the Ghosals of Calcutta.
55. The nature of the financial exhaustion of the zamindars of the interior may be understood by the fact that Chaitanya Singh, zamindar of Bihsnupur "had to raise money in pawning the family idol of Madan Mohan to Gukul Mitra, a merchant of Bagbazar in Calcutta" (Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 113.) In Rajshahi the Rani sold her jewels and mortgaged her stipends (N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 75). In Mahmudshahi the zamindar mortgaged his stipends and his *saranjami* (charges of collection) to Santiram Sinha (N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 76).
56. "The progressive decline of North Bengal dates from the Famin. This region suffered from further decay because of the transfer of Diwani Offices from Murshidabad to Calcutta in 1772. So long as the wealth of the country centred in Murshidabad more money circulated in the upper parts of Bengal. There was now no considerable market in the proximity. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 64.
57. See N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 81.
58. Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 228.
59. Quoted by Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 250, note.
60. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 175.
61. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 30.
62. Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 229.
63. H. Beveridge, *The District of Bakarganj: Its History and Statistics*, London, 1876, p. 192.
64. Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 98-99.
65. Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 184.
66. Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 256.
67. "But the penetration of the new rich class of Calcutta in local land control systems was not as massive as has hitherto been imagined. The new landed families of Calcutta like the Debs and the Tagores, and surviving older magnates like the Rajas of Burdwan, came to form a rich zamindar group above the smaller gentry and constituted the uppermost stratum of Bengali society in the nineteenth century" ... Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 285, note.
- 67a. "Urban house and ground property was a much safer field of investment for bankers, merchants and money lenders in Calcutta than was landed property in the mufassil"—Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 257-259.
68. Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 256. Why did the Calcutta capitalists take to the purchase of urban property? Ratnalekha answers (*Op. Cit.*, p. 259): The market for urban property was not vitiated by fraud and there was no problem of taking possession of such property, whereas in the case of landed property brought to sale for arrears of revenue, the bidders had to gain inside information about profitable 'lots' and had subsequently to negotiate with the existing under-tenure holders and the former proprietors for taking possession of the purchased lots".
69. Quoted by N. K. Sinha, p. 222.
70. N. K. Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 223.
71. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 76. Also see pp. 144-47, Appendix III. For further information about Gokul Ghosal see *Prods. of BOR*, dated 20 April, 1798, Nos. 5-14,

71a. "Ramdulal Dey, one of the principal commercial magnates in Calcutta, possessed, according to inventory, a large amount of money lent on interest, ready money to the extent of Rs. 33 lakhs, more than a dozen houses all over Calcutta, four suburban gardens, considerable urban ground in Calcutta and Benaras, and two godowns in New Chinabazar in Calcutta. In addition to this vast urban property and lent-out money and cash, he had only a small piece of rent-free brahmottar land of 10 bighas in 24 Parganas, a more substantial lakhiray or rent-free property of 1,088 bighas in Burdwan, and a small taluq in pargana Dorodumnan in Midnapur"—Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 256.

72. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 27.

73. Ratnalekha observes "... the zamindars whom the British recognised as landlords were mostly a mushroom class of adventurers raised to their position of pre-eminence in the first half of the eighteenth century by the reduction of older proprietors. Many of the reduced older proprietors no doubt survived as small taluqdars. And it was this smaller class of taluqdars and zamindars who succeeded in buying up the greatest number of the titles brought into circulation by the sale of the zamindaris. The detailed area studies confirm the recent finding, put forward by Islam (Sirajul Islam) as an all-Bengal proposition, that the principal group among auction purchasers were the existing zamindars, and not the Calcutta merchants"—Ratnalekha Ray, *Op. Cit.*, p. 252.

"It is entirely a wrong notion to believe however that the Calcutta banians and merchants monopolised the purchases of the zamindari lands. The banians and merchants from all over the country constituted the third most extensive purchasers of lands"—Sirajul Islam, *The Permanent Settlement in Bengal*, p. 255.

74. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 16.

75. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 15.

76. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 16.

77. *Ibid.*

78. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 16-17.

79. The policy of revenue-oriented zamindari administration was laid down by the Directors of the Company long ago: "Along with the consideration of the great investment it is our being possessed of a strong fortification and large tract of land and prospect from thence of raising a considerable revenue" quoted by Gurner, *Op. Cit.*, p. 59, Gurner writes: "Revenue and fortifications were the corner stone of the structure to be built on the basis of the zamindari", p. 59.

80. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 18-19.

81. Quoted from the *Prods. of the Calcutta Committee of Revenue*, Fort William, by Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

82. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 17.

83. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, p. 18.

84. Pradip Sinha, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 16-17. Pradip Sinha writes; "The opulent households or prominent family residences tended to draw clusters of people around them. These people were needed for services. The relationship between masonry houses (*kothabari*) and hutments (slum) is partly a modern variant of this development"—Sinha p. 20.

85. Irfan Habib, *The Agrarian System of Mughal India*, p. 169.

86. For details see Ranjit Sen's forthcoming book *Understanding Indian History*, Ch. II.

THE ECONOMIC GROWTH OF THE KOLAR GOLD FIELDS, 1881-CIRCA 1955 : INTRODUCTION, DISCOVERY AND SOURCE MATERIALS

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This paper sets out to do three things. First, it briefly examines the growth of the mining sector in the economy during the late colonial period. With this as the background I then introduce the development of the gold-mining industry and, in particular, its most important component, the Kolar Gold Field, located in the erstwhile Princely State of Mysore. Secondly, I chart the history of gold extraction prior to the arrival of the British and then consider the modern exploration work, culminating in the re-opening of the Fields in the early 1880's. Finally, and as a prelude to future work and analysis, I set out the range of source materials that are available in India and the U. K. These are of both a qualitative as well as a quantitative kind.

I General Introduction

In their different — and not always complementary — ways, economists and economic and social historians have long been aware of the ambiguities surrounding the role of mineral extraction in the long-run growth and development of nations, especially those we now designate as “Third World”. Whether, or rather in which particular combination of circumstances, the mining of both precious and industrial raw material deposits promotes, retards, or somehow distorts and inequitably distributes the fruits of per capita income growth and the wider complex of structural changes within an economy is a matter of heated historical controversy, as well as being one of considerable world-wide contemporary moment. In addition to the debate revolving around the actual process of mining itself — including the recent burgeoning stream of (primarily neo-Classical) literature addressed to systematically examining the economics of non-renewable natural resource endowments by deploying the latest and most sophisticated techniques of analysis, there are a host of wider, more transcendental issues touching upon *inter alia*, international trading relationships, processing potential to improve upon the value-added, enclave and dualist structures, the implant of foreign capital, the activities of the transnational corporations, and the part played by local state and national governments. Now although there is a strong temptation to reduce the dispute to a matter of simple opposites, say as between the proponents of

Liberal Orthodoxy on the one hand and neo-Marxism on the other, or even, at a different level, the tension between theoretical modelling and detailed empirical investigation, this needs to be resisted. This is because, firstly, there exists a basic lack of unanimity within the respective traditions themselves and secondly because, to date, no single unitary framework of analysis has emerged which can satisfactorily handle the profoundly different forms of mining experience that have been identified. This is not simply a reflection of the obvious diversity of geographical, geological and geophysical conditions that pertain both between and within nation states, but is also a compound of several modes of organisation, operation, ownership and control regimes, and differing types of property rights, fiscal conventions, overseas trade outlets, local patterns of employment and hence of regional multipliers and, not least, the specific time dimension of the exploitation. Indeed, in deference to the widely acknowledged importance accorded to the play of those particularistic factors which characterise the development of a mining enterprise in a given region over a given period of time, scholars have quite understandably tended to highlight the unique quality of the experience they are most familiar with, rarely giving more than a token mention to the universal aspects or dwelling upon possible comparisons. This reluctance to generalise and invoke parallels elsewhere has been further reinforced as a result of the increasing tendency within the international division of scholarly labour towards area specialisation, and the not unconnected fact that most attention has been concentrated on those mining economies which have achieved towering stature in the modern era — especially South Africa, Australia and the U.S.A. — on account of the legendary mineral strikes, the spectacular story of certain mines and entrepreneurs, and their consequent national and international import. But though the academic community has undoubtedly derived enormous benefit from the rising number of in-depth investigations of selected mining ventures, we do not seem to have made much progress in effecting meaningful comparisons, drawing-up illuminating contrasts, consolidating methodological advances, and laying down the necessary foundations for producing a more global perspective.

The purpose of this paper is to alert colleagues to one part of a wider programme of work designed to examine the growth and development of the mining sector in the Indian subcontinent during the colonial and early post-Independence periods. This sector has been almost completely ignored by students of Indian economic and social history, and its therefore not surprising that it has hardly received more than passing mention in the wider literature and discourse. Despite the popular image of the Indian colonial economy as being heavily orientated towards primary production and raw-material supply, few researchers — whether based in India or outside — have thought it worth their while to pursue the topic of mining

in a serious and sustained fashion. This has meant that neither the sector as a whole nor the career of any one of its constituent parts features in the standard secondary interpretations (including the recent *Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. 2), in anything other than a minimalist, highly superficial and, in my mind at least, totally unsatisfactory manner.¹ Evidently mining is to economic history what economic history has long been to political (Nationalist) history i.e., something of a Cinderella subject: quite simply it has not been considered important enough to warrant more than a very low level of priority. I suspect that the major reason for this neglect is its perceived relative insignificance. The sector has never commanded more than a maximum of approximately 1% of N.P.P. over 1890-1947; it has never accounted for more than a tiny fraction (around 0.4% on average) of the total occupied labour force over 1881-1951; and has only contributed — at its height — just about 3% of the total value of domestic exports.² Yet, like many other elements relating to the huge and densely populated subcontinent, this modest degree of relativity disguises impressive absolute magnitudes. Thus between the turn of the twentieth century and Independence the combined net values of the minerals falling within the Group I category of officially recorded returns³ rose from Rs 5.3 *crores* (approx. £ 3.6 million) to Rs 43.1 (£ 32.3 million) in current prices or by 117% in constant 1938-39 prices; the number of people directly employed in mining jumped from 124,000 to just under half a million; and the level of mineral exports underwent rapid expansion until the onset of the Great Depression (and then never really recovered this momentum for the rest of the period). But by 1947 the range of minerals being mined was impressive and included seven major products *viz* coal (Rs 43.8 *crores*, gold (Rs 9.9 cr), mica (Rs 4.6 cr), building materials (Rs 3.6 cr), salt (Rs 2.5 cr), manganese (Rs 2.1 cr and petroleum (Rs 1.1 cr); eighteen medium-scale products, *viz* iron-ore (Rs 81 *Lakhs*), copper (Rs 60.4 L), illemitite (Rs 1.6 L), china-clay (Rs 14.6 L), steatite (Rs 10 L), chromite (Rs 9.9 L), fire-clay (Rs 7.0 L), magnesite (Rs 6.9 L), kyanite (Rs 6.7 L), saltpetre (Rs 6.4 L), gypsum (Rs 4.7 L), lead (Rs 4.2 L), barytes (Rs 3.3 L), emeralds (Rs 2.5 L), ochre (Rs 2.0 L), diamonds (Rs 1.7 L), graphite (Rs 1.6 L) and bauxite (Rs 1.6 L); and a dozen minor ones including silver, sillimanite, wolfram, pyrites borundum, fullers earth, asbestos, zinc, felspar, rutile, apatite and sapphires.⁴ Now admittedly although there are still very many glaring lacunae in our knowledge of modern Indian economic history it would surely be difficult for anyone to gainsay the case for taking a close look at the growth and development of this sector.

To the extent that it is germane to this paper I will briefly outline the procedure of the research that has been done so far. First I have begun a comprehensive bibliographical and data search pitched at the sectoral

level. This of course includes quantitative and qualitative material, and both primary and secondary sources located in India and the U.K. A large number of statistics have been collected, collated and then placed on computer file. At the same time, work has started upon building up a series of individual profiles of the different minerals. Since gold must rank high on the list of research interest, if only because of its key contribution to the value of output over the long-run, most attention has been concentrated on this industry — with a side-ways glance at coal mining, the largest single entity of the mineral sector. The recent centenary celebrations (1983) of the Kolar Gold Field Undertaking (by far the most important gold mining area) provided an opportunity to gain an entry into several hitherto inaccessible collections, and although progress has still been disappointingly slow and patchy the data gathering process is now well under way. This paper then is very much a report of research in progress since little analytical work has yet been possible. In what follows, I therefore do no more than introduce the area and the set of problems I intend to follow up (Section II); discuss the discovery — or rather the re-discovery — of gold-bearing lodes and consider the beginning of modern mining (Section III); and finally, in an extended Appendix, indicate the type of sources and data that are available.

II The Kolar Gold Field

The exploitation of the Indian sub-continent's one significant deposit of auriferous ore — located in the Kolar District of the erstwhile Princely State of Mysore (now subsumed into present-day Karnataka) — is surely one of the classic, albeit lesser known, cases of primary extractive enterprise in an imperial setting. From the commencement of modern mechanised mining operations in the early 1880s down to the first round of nationalisation in 1955⁵ at which point the most profitable pay-lodes had all but been exhausted, the Kolar Gold Fields were owned and managed by private British capital and so many of the well-known characteristics that have come to typify enclave enterprise were to be found in there. Thus, most of the high value material inputs, and all of the machinery and plant, were obtained from abroad, largely the U.K., and the upper echelons of management and engineering staff were Europeans (mainly Englishmen from Cornwall and, more surprisingly, a sprinkling of Italians) recruited to India by the lure of a somewhat higher pecuniary — and substantially higher non-pecuniary — rate of remuneration than was available back home. By way of contrast, the raw and largely “unskilled” labour force was indigenous, although a majority were non-Mysoreans who lived on-site in a number of specially constructed camps which soon took on the form of a permanent and concentrated community settlement dubbed “K.G.F. City”. This township grew with great rapidity, and the very suddenness of

its development created a whole host of festering social ills. Given the encouragement proffered to private foreign capital by the Mysore Raj underpinned, of course, by the general policy of their imperial masters, the mining interests became extremely powerful and influential, and with the assistance of a small army of retainers and police the Company Town became their undisputed fief. The industry became the foremost organised modern economic activity in the State, and the voice of the owners and managers was always heard with great respect and esteem in the local corridors of power (indeed for a time they could boast their own "special interest" representative in the Bangalore Legislative Assembly). In their negotiations with the governing authorities over issues of potential conflict with the State such as property rights, the level of taxation and charges for public utility services, they invariably succeeded in securing the best possible deal for the mines, and they were also able to induce the Mysore Raj to invest — at public expense — in an infrastructure (including one of the world's largest H.E.P. schemes and railway branchline connection) which indirectly enabled the management to overcome the rather difficult geological conditions that they were confronted with, and this went a long way towards ensuring a thriving and flourishing reward on capital. Indeed the companies became extremely profitable ventures and regularly paid out huge dividends which were all repatriated back to Britain. On the other hand, in late nineteenth-century Mysore local entrepreneurship — for quite understandable reasons — was somewhat thin on the ground, the pool of mine engineering knowledge was virtually non-existent, and the supply of private indigenous capital was generally reckoned to be shy of risky industrial undertakings: it is therefore highly unlikely that the Field would have been re-discovered — let alone worked — had it not been for British enterprise. In short a detailed case-study of the K.G.F. undertaking provides us with an excellent opportunity to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of this form of economic growth.

In marked contrast to the other major gold-mining industries of the world, especially South Africa, California and eastern Australia, the story of the development of the K.G.F. has attracted scant scholarly attention both within as well as without India. Apart from the general lack of interest in mining as already alluded to above there are probably four specific reasons for this neglect. First, because the supply of sub-continental gold — of which the K.G.F. contributed approx. 97% of the total over 1890-1950 (Table 1b) — never exceeded a modest fraction of the world supply (just under 4% at its peak before the First World War, Table 1a), the Field was never in the top league of producers.⁹ Although there was a flurry of speculation in Indian gold mining shares in the City of London in the late 1870s and early 1880s, the feverish excitement of a "great discovery" such as that which occurred over the Klondike or the Rand was

absent, and hence Indian gold failed to capture the popular imagination and she missed out altogether on the formation of a romantic and legendary saga of discovery. Secondly, because of its relatively modest size and restricted scale, gold-mining has never been considered to be an industry of great national import in the same way as say cotton, jute or tea ; and even within the mineral sector of the economy it was rapidly overshadowed – even eclipsed – by other types of mining activity, particularly coal (far less glamorous but much more significant industrially, Table 2). Thirdly, and not unconnected with this last point, the gold-bearing regions lay just outside – in fact not more than a few miles away – the formal jurisdiction of the British Raj, and by one of those fortuitous coincidences of history, one year before mining began Mysore was handed back to the descendants of the former royal family after half a century of British “caretaker” rule.⁷ Although Princely autonomy was highly circumscribed and, in a real sense, quite fictional at least as far as basic issues were concerned,⁸ nevertheless there was a degree of administrative separateness, and this has induced many writers to effectively exclude the States from their “normal” unit of sub-continental analysis, i.e. British India. Unfortunately Princely India has aroused only a limited amount of scholarly attention and, as a result, a patchy and a somewhat curious historiography has emerged (not a little concerned with the more colourful and scandalous aspects of dynastic affairs); only with the publication of a number of serious accounts of political, social and economic change in the last dozen years or so, has this begun to alter.⁹ Finally there are some formidable data problems. It is extremely difficult to gain access to the extant business records, and even some public archives are not as yet freely open to *bonafide* inspection.¹⁰ More grievously, many of the original papers of the management team, John Taylor & Sons have apparently been destroyed,¹¹ and the files compiled by the U.K. Registrar of Joint Stock Companies in London (in the Board of Trade) relating to the largest of the major enterprises, the Mysore Gold Mining Company Ltd., were inexplicably shredded by the Public Records Office in the mid-1950s.¹² These lacunae cannot easily be made good and they may well preclude the kind of analysis that has now become the stock-in-trade of many historians, especially those practising cliometrics ; but fortunately as I shall hope to show, there is sufficient surviving data and documentation available which does permit us to piece together many of the main threads of the growth of this industry.

III The Origins, Discovery and Establishment of the Undertaking

In a fascinating study of the extent of gold mining operations and the array of techniques deployed in ancient India the distinguished Cambridge archaeologist F.R. Allchin notes that “ever since Herodotus drew attention to the vast quantity of gold dust which the populous Indian province paid

to Darius the Achaemenid, the world has thought of India as a source of gold".¹³ Indeed there appears to be a strong case (backed by no less a figure than Max Müller) for thinking that India was the Ophir to which the Biblical King Solomon despatched his traders to obtain gold for the adornment of his temple circa 950 B.C.¹⁴ The claim of legendary abundance which was echoed on a world scale through the writings of the Roman historian Pliny his journal written in A.D. 77, and the peripatetic merchant-adventurer Marco Polo was not without substance,¹⁵ and now there is a great deal of hard evidence which confirms the existence of a flourishing gold producing industry in the subcontinent during late Antiquity: carbon dating suggests that the period between the fourth century B.C. and the second century of the Christian era was the time of greatest activity.¹⁶ Although there is scanty surviving information and even fewer artefacts concerning the panning of gold in areas of known alluvial deposits such as Chôta Nagpur — for the obvious reason that little permanent equipment was needed — we know that reef and vein mining was extensively carried on in the Deccan, especially in Mysore and Madras (pre-1947 borders). Although some of the old workings were of an open-cast type the great majority were underground mines reaching depths of up to 300 feet, and in one instance, that of Hutti in Raichur District, as much as twice that figure.¹⁷ Many mines ran-on for several miles and both archaeologists and modern mining engineers have expressed astonishment over the "remarkable mining skills of the ancients",¹⁸ and have marvelled at the "vast amount of work done" given the "absence of pumping machinery and hauling engines".¹⁹ In the Kolar complex — and at Nundydroog in particular — an immense labyrinth of tunnels and shafts were discovered,²⁰ and Allchin waxes lyrical over the mighty efforts and no little technical prowess of the workforce: "the achievement of these old miners remains a matter of wonder, to be set beside the other records of early mining, be they in Egypt, Sinai, Cyprus or Greece".²¹ Though the causes of the decline of the industry are far from clear, it seems reasonable to surmise that the miners progressively encountered grave geo-physical and hydrological problems which defied easy solution given the existing levels of technology and the contemporary stock of relevant scientific and engineering knowledge. The removal of surplus water and the associate question of combating the tendency to flood during the monsoon, together with the absence of effective explosive devices ("fire-setting", the most favoured technique for separating gold ore from the schists and the quartz, was only feasible at relatively shallow levels) were the main obstacles constraining output growth, and unlike the British coal masters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries who responded to geophysical challenge with gusto and no little ingenuity, the subcontinental miners were seemingly unable to develop the machinery and requisite skills to cope with ever-greater depths.²² As soon as one outcrop or vein was worked to the limit of

existing technology a process of reconnoitring elsewhere in the vicinity would begin, and if the signs were favourable, mining would re-commence at the new site. Once this highly land-extensive mode of operation had exhausted the known auriferous deposits, mining activity ceased relatively abruptly, and prior to the establishment of the British some seven centuries later there is no record of gold being found on any real scale. Neither the profuse range of Mughal papers nor the accounts of the famous European travellers to India during the late "Middle Ages" mention the existence of a gold mining industry,²³ and the rumour that the charismatic Tipu Sultan and perhaps even his father Hyder Ali became involved with a mining venture at the end of the eighteenth century has yet to be substantiated.²⁴ As far as our purpose is concerned the significance of the early history of gold mining is two fold. First, the notion that India's rocks, soil and river beds harboured the glittering metal persisted over a long period of time, and not a few Europeans resident in India — particularly those posted to civilian position in the southern districts of British India, military staff in cantonments and stations, and those sent to serve in the various Native States — entertained hopes of a grand windfall discovery.²⁵ Secondly, the abandoned workings provided valuable clues to the geographical and geological locations most likely to yield up the golden fruit,²⁶ and indeed Williams — writing in the 1930s — noted that "only mines which have been started on the sites of the old workings have been successful".²⁷ Explorers were also alerted to sites by place names the outstanding example here being that of Oorgaum or the earlier version Worigum — a word originally from the Tamil meaning "melting", and by surviving oral tradition.²⁸

The first written and fully authenticated report of gold discovery in Mysore was made by a British army officer, one Lieutenant John Warren of the H. M. 33rd Regiment of Foot, at the turn of the nineteenth century. Soon after the final defeat of the East India Company's greatest contemporary thorn-in-the-flesh — Tipu Sultan — at Seringapatam, it was found necessary to re-draw the frontiers of the now truncated "rebel" State. Whilst engaged upon the task of surveying the eastern borders in February 1802 Warren states that he "heard a vague report that gold had been found in the earth, somewhere near a small hill called Yerra Baterine Corida, about nine miles east of Bodicotta a large village in the Colar District".²⁹ Warren followed up these rumours by offering a small reward to anyone who could show him evidence of gold "tracings" and shortly afterwards a *ryot* from the small village of Worigum took him to the place and produced "a load of the impregnated earth".³⁰ Now obviously seriously interested, Warren recruited a small party of local villagers, principally women, and began to dig out small ruts from the surrounding jungle. Having extracted "a sufficient quantity of earth" they then proceeded to separate the metallic substances by a "primitive and coarse" process of

stirring the earth by hand and mixing it with water. The next day Warren was led to a village called Marcoopam (Marikuppan) lying just four miles south of Worigum and was shown a small maze of pits of shallow depth (30 feet perpendicular) which branched out into a number of horizontal galleries following the line of the ore veins. Warren then reports that with the help of "a sufficient number of men who gain their livelihood by this apparently unprofitable trade"⁸¹ he extracted a quantity of metallic stones from which an amount of gold dust was pounded out. After exploring the area further he wrote to Lord Clive "then Governor of Madras and the liberal patron of all useful investigation", and met the Dewan (Chief Minister) and Resident of the Mysore Durbar, alerting them to his find.⁸² A little later Warren returned to the site and carefully examined the strata of an area of between 60 and 130 square miles. From his description there can be little doubt that he was very close to the modern mining workings and indeed it is clear that around a score of local villagers (people drawn exclusively from the low Pariah or Dkeroo castes) dug for gold on a regular basis during the dry season — though they were naturally very reluctant to "make it appear that their mines were deserving of the attention of the government".⁸³ Warren sent samples of the gold to the E. I. Co.'s mint at Madras and received assurances that the assays were favourable and showed high quality. After preparing a detailed report of his investigations the matter does not seem to have gone further — mainly because of Warren's "lack of skill in such matters". However his remarks that "the gold veins underground . . . extended to a very considerable extent"⁸⁴ establishes the authenticity of Warren's find and it is unfortunate that like the early discovery and subsequent ignoring of the Jharia coalfield at around the same time⁸⁵ this must surely count as one of the great lost mineral opportunities, and there can be little doubt that the course of both political as well as economic history would have been very different had Warren himself taken more trouble to follow up his discovery,⁸⁶ or had his conclusion that a more thorough survey could only be "ascertained by such means as government can command, and by the skill of a professional man"⁸⁷ been effected. As it transpired, over the next seven decades little British official or private interest was shown in further exploration of the area. Local villagers continued to potter around the old workings in the vague hope of uncovering particles of gold dust that may have been overlooked by their forebears. We know this because a number of serious accidents were reported to the authorities and in 1859 steps were taken to prohibit underground work⁸⁸; and in the early 1860s some of the British military contingent of the Bangalore cantonment formed a small syndicate to prospect Kolar, but their efforts were probably quite unprofessional and no material rewards resulted.⁸⁹

The credit for the re-discovery of the golden lodes undoubtedly belongs

to another British (Irish) military officer stationed at Bangalore, one Michael F. Lavelle.⁴⁰ His career had taken him to New Zealand fighting the Maories in the 1864 War, and whilst there he couldn't help but be affected by the gold fever that was sweeping the colony at that time, and there is some indication that he picked up the rudiments of exploration and prospecting. On his return to Mysore he, as Warren and the ill-fated syndicate before him, became interested in the rumours of gold in Kolar and in 1871 went to the District to see for himself. Over the next two seasons Lavelle, keeping his investigations a closely guarded secret, managed to locate three promising auriferous strata and on 20th August 1873 he applied for an exclusive prospecting licence.⁴¹ At this juncture he was evidently still unsure of the size and significance of the gold deposits and his request was couched in general language so that coal (of which there had been no hint of any sizeable occurrence anywhere in the State) and a miscellany group of other minerals were included. Between the receipt of this application and the autumn of the following year, the Chief Commissioner of Mysore consulted with his advisors, the local officials in Kolar, and the Government of India department responsible for mining rights (then Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce),⁴² and eventually on the 16th September 1874 the State Government informed Lavelle that his application was successful — and the terms that were offered were suitably liberal: an exclusive three-year prospecting licence on ten blocks of land of two square miles each; the exclusive right to commence mining on any or all of the selected blocks for a firm twenty-year lease; and a 10% royalty reduced to 5% in 1876 to be paid to the State on the sale proceeds.⁴³ Four days later the authorities were told that these terms had been accepted, and Lavelle began work in earnest. His immediate objective was the sinking of a shaft at Ooregaum, but after a few months labour Lavelle came to realise that the task of opening-up the site would require a much greater amount of fixed capital investment than he himself possessed and in fact over the following dozen years or so an underestimation of the costs of development was to characterise all the subsequent initiatives. The next best solution open to the undaunted Lavelle was to somehow arouse the entrepreneurial spirit of his close military colleagues, and armed with an authorisation from the State to transfer the lease to other parties obtained on 28 March 1876,⁴⁴ he spent an energetic two years hawking this proposal around the domiciled cantonment population.⁴⁵ Early in 1877 he succeeded in persuading no less a figure than Major General de la Peor Beresford of the Madras Staff Corps: to head a new syndicate of European officers and together they floated the Kolar Concessionaries Co., Ltd. with a capital of only £ 5,000⁴⁶ The little information we have about this short-lived enterprise — it went into liquidation within two years — suggests that even with the assistance of two imported Australian miners, it managed to unearth only a minute quantity of auriferous quartz prior to

exhausting its restricted capital base.⁴⁷ Undeterred by this setback Lavelle and Beresford decided to expand their horizons and on 23rd December 1897 the first gold mining company to be registered in India (Madras), the Ooregum Gold Mining Co. Ltd. was established with a nominal capital of Rs 70,000, of which Rs 57,500 was paid-up.⁴⁸ Once again, however, the very scale of the necessary operations proved to be much greater than was anticipated, and both Lavelle and Beresford recognised the need to involve a wider circle of capitalists and to place the mining activity upon a more professional footing. The well-known agency house Messrs. Arbuthnot & Co. of Madras was brought into the picture via the good offices of one A. McKenzie and they soon acquired the lease and the concession.⁴⁹ Arbuthnots raised fresh capital — some Rs 1,30,000 — in order to finance the installation of some basic machinery and stores, and they hired a qualified mining engineer, one John Munday, who also had had considerable experience in Australia to supervise new sinking work. But success continued to elude the men on the spot and only some 40 ozs. of gold were mined. As a last resort the Agency replaced Munday and recruited another mining expert Thomas Bray to try his hand, but to no avail⁵⁰: an even greater capital commitment married to a more scientific approach, or simply a measure of sheer luck was needed to overcome the natural hurdles. Arbuthnots decided to be rid of this potential albatross and sold out their holding to a group of London financiers.⁵¹

By that time, however, the whole climate of investment in the Indian subcontinent had undergone a profound change, and the relatively high price Arbuthnots received for their Ooregum assets (£ 45,000) was a reflection of the mini gold boom that was currently sweeping the London Stock Exchange.⁵² A number of events in the international economy during the 1870s — notably the adoption of the Gold Standard by an important group of North European nations including Germany, the Netherlands and Scandinavia, and the import into the U.S.A. of unprecedentedly large amounts of gold (most of which was used to finance European cereal imports) — gave rise to the fear of a general shortage of the precious metal, and from December 1879 to the summer of 1881, no less than ninety-two gold mining companies were formed in Britain alone, forty-four of which were connected with south India.⁵³ This burgeoning interest owed little to the pioneering efforts of Lavelle and his associates, or indeed to the prospects of finding gold in Mysore State: the boom was actually the outcome of exploratory activity in the nearby Wynaad District of the Madras Presidency.

The origins and course of the Wynaad gold rush date back to the early 1870s when two British coffee planters, Messrs George Viger and George Withers — both of whom, interestingly enough, had mined gold in Aus-

tralia — discovered what they thought was a rich vein of auriferous quartz.⁵⁴ Like Lavelle they had obtained a comprehensive prospecting lease and found that they needed outside capital to probe deeper. The Southern India Alpha Gold Mining Co. Ltd., and its successors, the Prince of Wales Tribute Co. and the Wynaad Prospecting Co. Ltd., were dogged by the same kind of ill-fortune as the Lavelle-inspired enterprises,⁵⁵ but a demi-official Report by a respected independent mining engineer, one R. Brough Smyth, yet another figure with considerable Australian experience, gave some grounds for optimism, at least as read in London (the fine print and studied caution of the text was ignored), and this paved the way for much speculative floatation and dealing — not a little of it outrightly fraudulent in character.⁵⁶ When it was finally acknowledged that there was hardly any gold — and certainly no payable lodes — in Wynaad the bubble burst, but by then just over £ 5½ million had been put into the Indian gold equity portfolio's and many fortunates had been won — and lost.⁵⁷

The only survivors of this collapse were those companies which had a firm property stake in Kolar — an area which had only been fortuitously caught up in the speculative fever simply by virtue of its relatively close physical proximity to the Wynaad.⁵⁸ In 1880 four of the five subsequently successful gold mining concerns based upon the K.G.F. had been floated (see Table 3), and almost from the outset they were managed by a respected and long established firm of mining engineers, John Taylor & Sons.⁵⁹ This was something of an inspired choice by the respective boards of directors since it was through their efforts that payable gold reserves were ultimately discovered — thereby enabling the entire undertaking to be put on a secure financial footing. Between 1880 and 1884 the fate of the companies had hung very much in the balance : although a limited amount of gold was brought up it did not appear to be sufficient to warrant further work on a new round of expensive investment.⁶⁰ Indeed, at the third shareholders' meeting of the Mysore Gold Mining Co., convened in London on 5.10.1883, the directors disclosed that the financial resources of the Company were in a parlous condition — the prospecting expenses had reduced the cash-in-hand to only a nominal figure (£ 13,000). The principal partner of John Taylor & Sons who was present at the gathering, (John Taylor), pleaded for more time and patience, and argued strongly against a proposal from the floor for winding-up and distribution of the remaining assets. He was able to persuade a majority of the shareholders to his way of thinking, and his judgement was rewarded within the space of twelve months. Early in 1884 two of the mining engineers in Kolar (Bell Davies and Captain B.D. Plummer) hit upon the richest ore-bearing land of the Field — the Champion lode — just a few feet below the depth that had hitherto been sunk (200').⁶¹ This discovery had two consequences. In the short run it revived London's interest in Indian gold mining shares

now, however, confined solely to those concerns operating within the K.G.F. Between 1885-87 there was a rush of new floatations with just under £ 2½ million called up,⁶² but once it became clear that the auriferous deposits were restricted to a narrow corridor of the lease block area and that most of the property of the new companies lay well to the east or west of this line interest began to evaporate, and of the eight gold mining enterprises that were found over the following decade only one, Champion Reef, proved successful.⁶³ Stock exchange trading thus became concentrated upon the five remaining companies. The second consequence of the strike was far more important in that it finally and unequivocally demonstrated to the team of mining engineers in Kolar, the capitalist in London and the administration of the new Maharajah of Mysore⁶⁴ that the potential of the Field was at last on the verge of realisation. The economic viability of the K.G.F. quickly became established and within a very short space of time all the manifestations of a large-scale mining industry began to emerge.

APPENDIX OF SOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Archival Holdings and Libraries

I In India

1. At the Kolar Gold Fields.
2. Karnataka State Archives, Bangalore.
3. Visvesveraya Collection, Bangalore.
4. Mysore University Library, Mysore City.
5. Tamil Nadu State Archives, Madras.
6. National Archives of India, New Delhi.
7. National Library of India, Calcutta.

II In the U.K.

1. India Office Library and Records.
 2. India House Library.
 3. Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, London.
 4. Companies House, London.
 5. Public Record Office, Kew.
 6. Institute of Geological Sciences Library, London.
 7. Library of the Camborne School of Mines, Cornwall.
 8. North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
 9. Geological Society of London, Piccadilly.
 10. British Museum (Natural History), London.
 11. Library of the London School of Economics.
- B. Official Publications, Serials, Reports *et al*
 C. English Language Newspapers.
 D. Dissertations.

E. List of Persons alive on 1.1.1984 who were associated with the K.G.F. Undertaking to November 1956.

F. Selected Secondary Sources.

G. Statistical Data.

N.B. Items marked + indicates that access is restricted.

A. Archival Holdings and Libraries

I In India

1. At the Kolar Gold Fields+

1. *Annual Reports of Directors* for the Mysore G. M. Co., (1891-1955); Champion Reef (1890-1953); Ooregum (1904-1953); Nundydroog (1881-1948); Balaghat (1901-1931); the Road Block G. M. Co., (1895-1905); Nine Reefs (1901-1905); the Kolar Mines Power Station Ltd., (1925-56); and the Kolar Brickmaking Co., (1922-1940).

2. *Annual Reports of the Superintendents* for the Mysore G. M. Co., (1947-1954); Champion Reef (1944-1955); Ooregum (1952-1953); and Nundydroog (1923-1935, 1949-1956).

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"M" 11; 12

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EMO

EMI

GHM

No's 8-11

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E. *List of Persons alive on 1.1.1984 associated with the K.G.F. Undertaking in November 1956*

* Indicates a person who has recently been interviewed by me.

Mr & Mrs H. Stapleton*	Mr W.F. Ball*
Mr & Mrs J. Hooper*	Mr & Mrs Rishworth
Mr K. Kendall*	Dr & Mrs G. Dunkerley
Mr & Mrs C. Hosking*	Mrs M. Eastman
Mr A. Taylor	Mrs R. Cowlin
Mr J. Taylor*	Mr K. Trevena
Mr C. Stapleton	Mrs J. Wells
Mr & Mrs F. Chomeley*	Mrs K. Sharp
Mr & Mrs T.W. Parker	Mrs M. Rodda
Mrs M Taylor*	Mrs D. Rowe
Dr I. Jeffrey	Mr & Mrs K. Menadue
Mrs R. Roantree	Mr M. Dunlop
Mr & Mrs J. Caw	Mr & Mrs J. Williams
Mrs N. Dent	Mr & Mrs W.J. Hocking*
Mrs C. Walker*	Sri M.N. Sreenivasan*
Mrs E. Gwyn	Sri S.N. Jagadish*
Mr J.S. Everitt	Sri R. Krishnamurthy*

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N.B. Even a cursory glance at this list of references reveals that

- (1) no study of the K.G.F. Undertaking has appeared;
- (2) a great majority of the works cited are of general and usually only tangential relevance;
- (3) most of the studies appeared well before Independence.

G. Statistical Data

1. Production

- (i) volume and value (in Rs. and Sterling) of output by mine and in total 1882-1955 (Table 4).
- (ii) quality of output as in pennyweight yields by mine 1882-1951.
- (iii) quantity of ore milled by mine 1890-1955.

2. Measures of Physical Progress, 1882-1951

feet driven
 Shafts sunk (feet)
 stopping
 quantity of material excavated
 quantity of ore crushed.

3. *Material inputs*

Quantities and value of coal, firewood, timber, explosives, candles, electricity, reducing agents, steel, pig iron, shoes and dies castings, cement, retreatments, granite and fuses — all by mine and in total 1882-1950.

4. *Labour*

(i) total numbers employed together with different categories of employment by mine — European, Indian, male; female; above, below ground; contractor, non-contractor; labour productivity, 1891-1955.

(ii) monthly and annual wages and earnings by mine and in total 1898-1949: real wage calculations

(iii) wage gap between European and Indian employees

(iv) wages of selected occupations

(v) accident data

(vi) workmen's compensation

(vii) strikes

(viii) conditions of work.

5. *Machinery and Plant 1898-1950*

Details of all machinery and plant installed and working, 1898-1950.

6. *Land and taxation, 1880-1955*

(i) details of all leases

(ii) royalties, duty on gold, tax.

7. *Payments for services, 1907-1950*

(i) railway movements

(ii) water supply

(iii) electricity generated.

8. *Capital and Company data 1880-1955*

(i) paidup and nominal capital by Co. 1881-1954

(ii) dividend payments 1886-1954

(iii) net profits and the profit rate, 1886-1954

(iv) market value of Ordinary shares

(v) working costs of mining, milling

(vi) ore reserves

(vii) selected data on accounts.

9. *Population of K.G.F. City 1881-1961*

(i) ethnic/caste breakdown

(ii) birthplace and migration statistics

(iii) police data

(iv) sanitation data

(v) housing.

TABLE 1a

India's Ranking as a World Producer of Gold, 1897-1946

Date	The Sterling Value of Indian gold output as % of World output	India's Rank as a gold producing country
1897-1902	3.5	6
1904-1908	2.8	7
1914-1918	2.4	7
1919-1923	3	7
1924-1927	2	8
1929-1933	1.35	10
1946	1	14

Source: Derived from the *Records of the Geological Survey of India 1902-1950 passim*.

TABLE 1b

Output of Gold in India, 1890-1950*

1 Date	2 Output of Gold in India (oz)	3 Output of Gold in the K.G.F. as a % of 2
1890	107,720	97.9
1900	512,985	99.2
1910	572,920	95.6
1920	499,068	94.7
1930	329,172	99.9
1940	289,324	99.9
1950	196,925	96.2

Note: * excluding Burma

Source: *Ibid*

TABLE 2

Value of Mineral Output in India (in current prices) 1900-1946*

Date	Total Value of Mineral Output in India £ (000)	Value of K.G.F. output as a % of 2	K.G.F. rank as a mineral industry
1900	4,338	43.3	1
1905	5,687	41.5	1
1910	7,698	27.3	2
1915	10,457	20.9	2

1920	30,219	8.7	4
1925	26,233	6.3	4
1930	18,328	7.5	3
1935	17,626	13.0	3
1940	16,435	14.8	2
1946	37,016	7.1	2

Note: * "India" includes Burma down to 1938, thereafter it is excluded.
Source: *Rec. G.S.I., passim.*

TABLE 3

The Major Gold Mining Companies at Work in the K.G.F. 1880-1955

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
Name of Company	Co. Registration No.	Date of Formation	No. of Block leases	Leasehold acreage
1. The Mysore Gold Mining Co. Ltd.	14275	6.7.1880	7	6,040
2. The Ooregum Gold Mining Co. of India Ltd.	14559	25.10.1880	2	931
3. The Nundydroog Gold Mining Co. Ltd.	14610	6.11.1880	4	4,426
4. Balaghat Gold Mines Ltd.	50413	3.12.1880	2	1,567
5. The Champion Reef Gold Mining Co. of India Ltd.	29078	31.10.1889	2	1,095

Notes: 2. Formerly styled the Ooregum Gold Mining Co., Ltd., registered in Madras 23.12.1879; the Co. went into voluntary liquidation in 1884, but this was stayed by order of the High Court and the Co. was re-organised a year later; in 1953 it was amalgamated with Champion Reef.

3. The Co. was reconstructed on 20.11.1920 as the Nundydroog Mines Ltd.

4. The original name of this Co. was the Balaghat Gold Mining Co. Ltd. and it was first registered in Madras; on 28.1.1886 it was re-organised and became known as the Balaghat-Mysore Gold Mining Co. Ltd. now registered in London. It was re-constructed on 20.12.1920. In September 1931 the assets of the Co. were acquired by Ooregum and the Co. went into voluntary liquidation.

5. The Co. was re-constructed on 31.10.1921 as the Champion Reef Gold Mines of India Ltd.

1, 2, 3, 5. All transferred to Indian registration on 1.3.1951.

Sources: Derived from the *Annual Reports of Directors* of the Co's., supplemented by, Stock Exchange (of London), *Official Year Book(s) and Intelligence*, 1885-1955 *passim*, and the B.T. 31 series in Companies House, London and the P.R.O., Kew,

TABLE 4

Volume and Value of Output of Gold from the K.G.F. 1882-1946

1. Date	2. Output in ozs	3. Index of (2)	4. Value in ₹	5. Index of (4)
1882	13	0.00	38	0.00
1883	35	0.01	96	0.01
1884	1173	0.23	4430	0.24
1885	6137	1.21	23989	1.28
1886	16066	3.15	63027	3.35
1887	14710	2.89	57023	3.03
1888	33881	6.65	128879	6.86
1889	77247	15.17	298861	15.90
1890	105523	20.72	409449	21.79
1891	130427	25.61	504324	26.84
1892	163180	32.04	622150	33.11
1893	207079	40.66	784842	41.77
1894	209989	41.23	795876	42.35
1895	256348	50.34	973610	51.81
1896	321584	63.15	1228829	65.40
1897	398224	78.19	1487140	79.14
1898	412892	81.07	1575966	83.87
1899	446397	87.65	1678464	89.32
1900	509272	100.00	1879085	100.00
1901	530142	104.10	1923131	102.34
1902	533492	104.76	1964509	104.55
1903	597884	117.40	2284072	121.55
1904	607578	119.30	2323194	123.63
1905	616758	121.11	2373457	126.31
1906	565208	110.98	2167636	115.36
1907	535085	105.07	2049063	109.05
1908	535653	105.18	2055857	109.41
1909	545309	107.08	2092177	111.34
1910	547746	107.55	2106133	112.08
1911	555011	108.98	2129873	113.35
1912	561065	110.17	2158362	114.86
1913	559198	109.80	2150194	114.43
1914	562353	110.42	2166101	115.27
1915	571199	112.16	2173066	115.64
1916	554301	108.84	2123073	112.98
1917	536559	105.36	2065986	109.95
1918	504412	99.05	1935407	103.00
1919	485248	95.28	1866213	99.31
1920	472958	92.87	2193539	116.73
1921	422533	83.97	2012316	107.09
1922	429559	84.35	1787764	95.14
1923	381059	74.82	1752334	93.25
1924	392578	77.09	1833847	97.59

1. Date	2. Output in ozs	3. Index of (2)	4. Value in £	5. Index of (4)
1925	393512	77.27	1683341	89.58
1926	382899	75.19	1631412	86.82
1927	381722	74.95	1627776	86.63
1928	375886	73.81	1604322	85.38
1929	363741	71.42	1548427	82.40
1930	329133	64.63	1394560	74.21
1931	330434	64.88	1559493	82.99
1932	329574	64.71	1923565	102.37
1933	335773	65.93	2084597	110.94
1934	321133	63.06	2209787	117.60
1935	326124	64.04	2294761	122.12
1936	331856	65.16	2314032	123.15
1937	330710	64.94	2305605	122.70
1938	321114	63.05	2386047	126.98
1939	314501	61.76	2435195	129.59
1940	289241	56.79	2442884	130.00
1941	285832	56.13	2491104	132.57
1942	260270	51.11	2835276	150.89
1943	252193	49.52	3823819	203.49
1944	187827	36.88	2670863	142.14
1945	168325	33.05	2563928	136.45
1946	131718	25.86	2360242	125.61

Note : * 1900 = 100

Sources : Derived from *Rec. G S.I., passim*, and the *Annual Reports of the Directors of the various Co's.*

1. Of the modern interpretations cf. D. Kumar with M. Desai (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, Vol. 2, c. 1757-c. 1970, (Cambridge 1983); N. Charlesworth, *British Rule and the Indian Economy 1800-1914* (London, 1982); K. de Schweinitz, Jr., *The Rise and Fall of British India: Imperialism or Inequality* (London, 1983); A. Sen, *The State, Industrialisation and Class Formation in India* (London, 1982); R. Von Albertini, *European Colonial Rule 1880-1940* (Oxford, 1982); B. Davey, *The Economic Development of India* (London, 1975); V. Pavlov et al, *India: Social and Economic Development 18th-20th Centuries* (Moscow, 1975); A.K. Bagchi, *Private Investment in India 1900-39* (Cambridge, 1972); R.L. Lidman and L.I. Domrese 'India' in W.A. Lewis (ed.), *Tropical Development 1880-1913* (London, 1970); G.K. Shirokov, *Industrialisation of India* (Moscow 1975); K.N. Chaudhury and C. Dewey (ed.), *Economy and Society: Essays in Indian Economic and Social History* (New Delhi, 1979); W.J. Macpherson, 'Economic Development in India under the British Crown', in A.J. Youngson (ed.), *Economic Development in the Long Run* (London, 1972); R.K. Ray, *Industrialisation in India: Growth and Conflict in the Private Corporate Sector 1914-47* (Delhi, 1979); I M.D. Little, 'Indian Industrialisation before 1945', in M. Gersovitz (ed.), *The Theory and Experience of Economic Development: Essays in Honour of Sir W.A. Lewis* (London, 1982); M.D. Morris et al, *Indian Economy in the Nineteenth Century* (Delhi, 1969), and V.B. Singh (ed.), *Economic History of India* (Bombay, 1965).

It is interesting to note that more attention was paid to mining in the older pre-war texts such as those of V. Anstey, *The Economic Development of India* (London, 1929), D.H.

Buchanan, *The Development of Capitalistic Enterprise in India* (New York, 1984) and D.R. Gadgil, *The Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times* (Bombay, 1944) than in the vast majority of the references cited above. It is certainly little short of astonishing that in over one thousand pages of text, the *Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. 2, contains only a handful of passing references to mining activity: indeed it is specifically excluded from consideration in its most logical phase namely, the chapter devoted the large-scale industries contributed by Professor M.D. Morris (pp. 553-676).

2. These and the estimates which follow have been derived from a variety of primary and secondary statistical surveys, the main ones of which are the relevant *Records* and the *Memoirs* of the Geological Survey of India, the *Annual Reports of the Chief Inspector of Mines in India*, the *Statistical Abstracts for British India*, the *Statistics of British India—Commercial Series*, *Census of India* volumes, and the *Annual Statements of the Seaborne Trade and Navigation of British India*. Siva Sivasubramonian's 'Income from the Secondary Sector of India, 1900-47', *Indian Economic and Social History Review* XIV, (4) 1977 has also been useful.

3. Between 1905 and 1947 the *Records* of the Geological Survey of India classified minerals into two parts, viz. Group I which included those whose returns were considered to be reasonably accurate; and Group II which covered those (especially associated with the building and construction trade) which were not, at least not a regular basis. This latter category has therefore been omitted.

4. Derived from Table I of the *Records* of the Geological Survey of India 90, pp. 4-7.

5. The K.G.F. undertaking has had the unusual—and to the best of my knowledge unique—distinction of having been nationalised twice over, and that within the space of seven years. In the first instance all the assets of the existing mines and associate developments (the power station, the hospital, the water supply installations, the surface transport equipment and track, the palatial residence of the European managers and the extensive coolie quarters) were acquired by the Government of Mysore on 29.11.1956 from the previous British owners. After heated debate and no little controversy the compensation price was agreed at Rs. 1.64 crores. Sri. S. Nijalingappa the Chief Minister of the State became the chairman of the new organisation. For reasons that at present cannot be properly explored (the archives of the State Government and the Government of India in New Delhi are not open for this period, and the records of the Undertaking itself are closed for the period), the new owners were unable to cope with the many problems that they inherited, and on 1.12.1962 the K.G.F. was re-nationalised by the Central Government (Ministry of Finance, Department of Economic Affairs). After a no less acrimonious round of negotiations than had characterised the earlier exchanges between the former owners and their successors, a sum of no less than Rs. 3 crores became the settlement figure (the Mysore Raj had originally asked for double that amount). Cf. *Report of the Committee Constituted to Examine the Working of the Agreement of 1949 between the Government and the K.G.F. Mining Companies and Allied Matters* (Chairman H. Siddaveerappa, Bangalore, 1955); the *Deccan Herald* 3, 3, 17, 18 October 1956; *The Kolar Gold Mining Undertakings*, pamphlet issued on the occasions of the Mines Day (Ooregaum, 30.11.1957); Bharat Gold Mines Ltd., *Bharat Gold Mines at a Glance* (Ooregaum, 1977); and B.N. Sathyan (ed.), *Mysore State Gazetteer, Kolar District* (Bangalore, 1968), pp. 187 f.

6. Thus in 1908 the league table of gold producers was as follows:

Nations	Value (in current prices) of output, £'s millions
1. Transvaal	29.9
2. U.S.A.	19.5
3. Australia	12.3
4. Russia	4.5

5. Mexico	3.2
6. Canada	2.7
7. Rhodesia	2.5
8. India	2.1
9. New Zealand	2
10. West Africa	1.1
11. Others	7.7

Source : *Records of the Geological Survey of India* 39, p. 83.

7. For two modern accounts of the 1881 Rendition and its background see J. Manor, *Political Change in an Indian State: Mysore 1917-1955* (New Delhi, 1977), and B. Hettne, *The Political Economy of Indirect Rule: Mysore 1881-1947* (London and Malmo, 1978).

8. Karl Marx (wearing his journalist's hat) was amongst the first contemporary observers to point this out—see his article titled 'The Native States' in the *New York Daily Tribune* dated 25.6.1853. See also R. Palme Dutt, *India Today* (London, 1940), p. 403 and, for non-Marxist views, J. Manor, *loc. cit.*, and B. Hettne, *loc. cit.* esp. Part I.

9. Apart from the already quoted studies of Manor and Hettne see, for example, R. Jeffrey (ed.) *People Princes and Paramount Power: Society and Politics in the Indian Princely States* (Delhi, 1978)—which contains a useful review of the recent literature on political and social matters ('Introduction' pp. 1-31). For economic change, see J. Hurd II, 'The Economic Consequences of Indirect Rule in India', and his 'The Influence of British Policy on Industrial Development in the Princely States of India, 1890-1933', both in the *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, XI, (2), 1975 and XII, (4), 1975; my joint article 'The Economic Consequences of Indirect Rule in India: A Re-appraisal', *Indian Economic and Social History Review* XVI, (2), 1979; and E.S. Haynes, 'Comparative Industrial Development in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century India: Alwar and Gurgaon States', *South Asia* III, (2), 1980. Needless to say the *Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. 2 *op. cit.*, contains next to nothing on princely India.

10. I was only granted permission to sample a selection of the papers kept in the Record Room of the K.G.F. Despite having obtained clearance from the authorities in New Delhi and armed with letters of introduction written by former directors, high officials, and others, the local management steadfastly refused to allow me to examine many of even the pre-1947 holdings. The National Archives of India, Janpath, New Delhi, do possess papers relevant to the study (in the Foreign Department and its successor bodies cf. D.A. Low, J.C. Eltis and M.S. Wainwright, *Government Archives in South Asia* (Cambridge 1969, pp. 131-150), but those relating to Mysore have apparently not yet been properly sorted out and classified. There is also some data held in the Karnataka State Archives, Vidhana Soudha, Bangalore, which I was unable to call up.

11. Mr. H.E. Taylor has informed me that the great bulk of the papers of John Taylor & Sons kept in London was deliberately burnt by the family in the late 1960s. The explanation given was simply 'lack of space'. In the light of discussions with other interested parties and former employees, there is still some doubt in my mind about this story and I have not given up all hope of finding the relevant documentation.

12. I am at a loss to understand the decision of the P.R.O. official who ordered the destruction of the Mysore Gold Mining Company files—and yet permitted the records of a large number of lesser gold mining companies (including some that produced no gold whatsoever) to survive virtually intact.

13. F.R. Allchin, 'Upon the Antiquity and Methods of Gold Mining in India', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 5, 1962, p. 195.

14. Several authorities make this claim, see esp. T. Williams, 'Historical Notes on the Kolar Gold Field', *K.G.F. Mining and Metallurgical Society Bulletins*, 8(41), Nov. 1930

op. cit. pp. 128.

15. The reference to Pliny's observations made in the first century A.D. can be found in various volumes of the *Mysore Gazetteers*, for example, B.N. Sathyan (ed.), *op. cit.* p. 184; for Marco Polo, see R. S. Rungta, *Rise of Business Corporations in India 1851-1900* (Cambridge 1970) p. 136. Dipankar Lahiri's article, 'Mineralogy in Ancient India', *Indian Journal of the History of Science* 3(1), 1968, is also a useful source of reference as is T. Williams, *op. cit.*

16. Apart from Allchin's work cf. T. Pryor, 'Ancient Industry of India' in the special issue of *The Times* 20.6.1933 (London 1933); R.H. Elliot, *Gold, Spices and Coffee Planting in Mysore* (London 1894), ch. VII; F. Bosworth Smith, *K.G.F. and its Southern Extension* (Madras 1889), Ch. IV; F.H. Hatch, *The Kolar Gold Field, Being a Description of Quartz Mining and Gold-Recovery as Practiced in India* (*Mem. G.S.I.*, XXXIII, 1, 1901) pp. 1, 17 f; J.M. Maclaren, *Gold: its geological occurrence and geographical distribution* (London 1908), p. 38; K.K. Sen Gupta and J. Sen Gupta, 'On Some Abandoned Gold Mines in Nilgiri and Wynad and their Economic Possibilities', *Quarterly Journal of the Geological, Mining and Metallurgical Society of India*, XXII, 1950; L. Munn, 'Observations and Notes on the Method of Ancient Gold Mining in southern India', *Transactions of the Mining and Geological Institute of India*, XXX, 1936 and his 'Ancient Gold Mining in the Area', *Journal of the Hyderabad Geological Society* II, (1), 1934; C.H. Rao (ed.), *Mysore Gazetteer* (Bangalore 1929), vol. III, ch. 5; R. Bruce Foote, 'Notes on a traverse across some gold fields of Mysore', (*Rec. G.S.I.* IV, Nov. 1882); M.H. Sathyan (ed.), *op. cit.* pp. 184 f; T. Williams, *op. cit.*; P. Sampat Iyengar, *Bulletin of the Mysore Geological Dept.* 7, 1916, pp. 5-8; 'Indian Gold Mining', in *The Mining World and Engineering Record*, June 26, 1937; and F.H. Cholmeley, 'Presidential Address', *K.G.F. Mining and Metallurgical Society Bulletins* 93 (21), May 1968.

17. Allchin, *op. cit.* p. 202, and B.N. Sathyan, *op. cit.* p. 184.

18. *Rec. G.S.I.*, XXXII, 1, p. 49.

19. F. Bosworth Smith, *op. cit.* p. 37.

20. B.N. Sathyan (ed.), *op. cit.* p. 189.

21. Allchin, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

22. In the British case the dwindling supplies of indigenous timber undoubtedly provided a great stimulus to the emerging coal industry—see the standard reference J.U. Nef, *The Rise of the British Coal Industry 1550-1700* (London 1932); and it is possible that a certain lack of national urgency may have held back technological experimentation and innovation in the subcontinent. Why these early Indian miners did not experience sufficient pressure to induce technical change remains something of a major historical puzzle. For a somewhat later period the question of technological stagnation over a broad range of activities has begun to interest a number of scholars, see for example I. Habib, 'Technology and Barriers to Social Change in Mughal India', *Indian Historical Review*, V, No's 1-2, July 1978-Jan. 1979.

A quite different explanation of decline is the effects stemming from the alleged break-up of slavery as a social institution during the first two centuries A.D. See R. S. Sharma *Sudras in Ancient India* (Calcutta 1958), and Allchin, *op. cit.* p. 211.

23. See I. Habib, *op. cit.*, esp. p. 173, B.N. Sathyan (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 130 and C.H. Rao (ed.), *op. cit.*, III, p. 199. If this rumour had any real substance it would surely not have escaped mention in either M.H. Gopal's study *Tipu Sultan's Mysore: An Economic Study* (Mysore 1971) or Asok Sen's, 'A Pre-British Economic Formation in India of the Late Eighteenth Century: Tipu Sultan's Mysore' in B. De (ed.) *Perspectives in Social Sciences 1: Historical Dimensions* (Delhi, 1977)

25. See R. H. Elliot *op. cit.*, ch. VII.

26. As one geologist has written 'as has been the case with all other known auriferous deposits, the attention of Europeans was directed by the numerous old native workings along

its strike', *Rec. G.S.I.*, LII, 1, p. 92. Many of the maps compiled by both the G.S.I. officers as well as those of the mining companies themselves carried very detailed specifications of the old workings, and whenever a new area was considered appropriate for prospecting (e.g. the Western Jodes in the K.G.F. in the 1920s) the first step was always an evaluation of the extent of ancient mining operations.

27. T. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

28. See M.A. Sreenivasan, *Labour in India: Socio Economic Condition of Workers in the Kolar Gold Mines* (New Delhi, 1980), pp. XVII f, and M. Shama Rao, *Modern Mysore* (Bangalore 1936), vol. 1, p. 129.

29. J. Warren, 'Observation on the Golden Ore found in the Provinces of Mysore, in the year 1802', extracted from the *Annual Asiatic Register*, 1804, and reproduced in the *K.G.F. Mining and Metallurgical Society Bulletins*, IV (21), Jan-June 1937, p. 235.

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 237.

33. *Ibid.*, p. 240.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 241.

35. Although the existence of coal deposits in the vicinity of Jharia ('Jherrial') was first established during the second decade of the nineteenth century (see W. Jones, 'A Description of the North-West Coal District', *Asiatic Researches* XVII, 1829, pp. 163-170), it was not until the early 1890s with the coming of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway that the Field was opened-up. For a discussion of some of the determinants of mineral discovery and the time-lag of exploitation as it pertains to Australia see G. Blainey, 'A Theory of Mineral Discovery: Australia in the Nineteenth Century', *Economic History Review*, 33, (2), 1970 and the subsequent controversy between M.J. Morrissey and R. Butt, and G. Blainey in the *E.H.R.* 26, 1973.

36. However interesting such speculation may be it should be pointed out that the contemporary state of mine engineering technology was probably insufficient to permit a successful outcome at that time.

37. J. Warren, *loc. cit.*, p. 241.

38. B.N. Sathyan (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 185.

39. *Ibid.* William's reports (*op. cit.*, p. 130) that the syndicate 'put a little capital which was quickly spent without any tangible result, and they soon abandoned the research'.

40. Unfortunately, I have been unable to trace the life and career of Michael Fitzgerald Lavelle in any real detail: a search of the relevant matter in the India Office Records has been virtually fruitless, and he remains, like the pioneering father of the Indian coal mining industry, William 'Guroo' Jones, (see C. Joseph, 'Notes on the Right Bank of the Hooghly', *Calcutta Review* iv, (8), July-Dec. 1845, esp. pp. 478-481), a shadowy figure. The only positive link between his military career and gold mining that I have been able to establish is that he was trained as a civil engineer. My information on his involvement with gold has been culled from the following sources: his own *Report on the Auriferous Tracts in Mysore*, dated 10.11.1886, which appears as Appendix A in R. Bruce Foot, *Report on the Auriferous Tracts in Mysore*, dated 11 June 1887, in the Vidhana Soudha, Bangalore; his correspondence with the Mysore authorities relating to lease applications *et. al.* SL. No's 1-8, 36, over 1873-4, *Selections from the Records—Gold Mining, 1873-1896*, Vidhana Soudha; R.H. Filhot, *op. cit.*, Ch. VIII; M. Shama Rao, *op. cit.* Ch. XVI; B.N. Sathyan (ed.), *op. cit.*, pp. 185 f; *Rec. G.S.I.*, 4, Nov. 1882, pp. 192 f; and T. William's *observations, op. cit.*, pp. 130 f.

41. Letter from M.F. Lavelle to the Chief Commissioner of Mysore dated 20.8.1873, SL. No. 1, Vidhana Soudha.

42. Letters from the Commissioner, Nundidroog Division to the Chief Commissioner, Mysore, dated 30.8.1873, No. 105, SL. No. 2; from the Chief Commissioner, Mysore to the

Commissioner, Nundidroog, dated 13.9.1873, No. 3214/G 114, SL. No. 3; from the Gvt. of India (R.A.C.) to the Chief Commissioner, Mysore, dated 4.10.1873, No. 841, SL. No. 4; from Mr. Lavelle to the Commissioner, Nundidroog dated 8.1.1874 SL. No. 5; from the Chief Commissioner of Mysore to the Commissioner, Nundidroog, dated 14.4.1874, No. 305/11, SL. No. 6; from the Commissioner, Nundidroog to the Chief Commissioner, Mysore, dated 2.10.1874, No. 180 G, SL. No. 7; all in the *Selections from the Records ... op. cit.*, Vidhana Soudha.

43. Progs., Chief Commissioner of Mysore, Communication No. 4340/G 130, dated 16.10.1874, *Selections from the Records, op. cit.*

44. Progs., Chief Commissioner of Mysore, No. 610/L 97, dated 28.3.1876, *Selections from the Records ... , op. cit.*

45. See R.H. Elliot *op. cit.*, p. 193, and B.N. Sathyan (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 186.

46. This was probably registered as a private limited liability company in London in late 1877 or early 1878: there is no surviving file of this enterprise in the B.T. 31 series in Companies House, London. It is however mentioned in the *Selections from the Records ... op. cit.*, and in B.N. Sathyan (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 186.

47. *Selections from the Records ... , op. cit.*, B.N. Sathyan (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 186, and T. Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

48. *Statist.* 12.11.1881.

49. On Arbuthnot & Co's involment see R.S. Rungta, *op. cit.*, p. 140, and N.Z. Ahmed, 'Some Aspects of the History of British Investment in the Private Sector of the Indian Economy, 1874-1914 (M.Sc. (Econ) dissertation, University of London, 1955) pp. 318 ff, and T. Williams *op. cit.*, p. 131.

50. *Times of India*, 24.7.1880.

51. Ahmed, *op. cit.*, p. 318. With this transfer Lavelle's interest in the gold field probably ceased, see R.H. Elliot, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

52. For a discussion of the boom as it relates to South India see D.E.W. Leighton, *The Indian Gold Mining Industry—its Present Condition and its Future Prospects*, (Madras, 1883) and R.S. Rungta, *op. cit.*, Ch. 8. Both of these works, however, especially the latter, suffer from not using the records available in Companies House, London, and I have found that there are a number of factual errors running through their respective accounts.

53. R.S. Rungta, *op. cit.*, p. 143, and D.E.W. Leighton *op. cit.*, Ch's 1 and 2.

54. *Ibid.*, and the *Times of India*, 24.7.1880.

55. See the *Correspondence Regarding Gold Mines in Wynaad, Malabar District*, (Madras, 1874), India Office Records, (26), 1532; R.B. Smith, *Report on the Alpha Gold Mine* (London, 1879), I.O.R., (16) 1825; D.E.W. Leighton, *op. cit.*, Ch. 1; and R.S. Rungta, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

56. R. Brough Smyth, *Report on the Gold Mines of the South Eastern Portion of the Wynaad and Caroor Ghat* (October, 1879).

57. cf. D.E.W. Leighton, *op. cit.*, Ch. 1, N.S. Ahmed, *op. cit.*, pp. 307 f, and R.S. Rungta, *op. cit.*, p. 145 f.

58. *Ibid.*

59. The firm of John Taylor and Sons was founded in 1798 by one of the most remarkable 19th century mining entrepreneurs John Taylor, F.R.S., F.G.S. Born in Norwich on 22.8.1799 Taylor became active in the early development of the Cornish and Devon metallic mining industry, and then gravitated towards mining enterprises in the UK, on the European continent (France, Spain, Germany and Italy), and further afield in North America, Latin America and Australia. Taylor, who originally trained as a land surveyor, became one of the leading figures in promoting the professionalisation of mine engineering and he became a leading advocate of establishing a school of mines in this country. On his death in 1863 his obituary stated that 'the name of John Taylor has become a household word whenever English mining enterprise has penetrated'. He was succeeded by his two sons John and

Richard who developed the business further and introduced mining consultancy and management all over the world. In the twentieth century the K.G.F. was the firm's most important area of activity. As a result of the increasing pressure from the new post-Independent Government of India for 'Indianization' a subsidiary company was formed in 1950 to conduct the management of the K.G.F. So powerful was Taylor's grip upon the mines and such was their level of experience that ever after the nationalisation of 1956 their involvement did not cease: they became Mining Consultants. And, indeed, following the second round of nationalisation six years later they were asked to continue, this time as Consulting Engineers—a position they held until the late 1960's. Unfortunately, since the firm remained a private limited-liability enterprise, there is on file for them in the BT 31 series and hence it has proved impossible to obtain direct details of profitability, ownership and contract terms. Information on the firm has been obtained by interviewing a number of former employees supplemented by 'The late John Taylor', *The Mining and Smelting Magazine* 3, 1863; L.P.S. Piper, *A Short History of the Camborne School of Mines* (Penzance 1979); *K.G.F. Mining and Metallurgical Society Bulletins*, X, (50), July 1940; and S.E. Taylor: 'Presidential Address', *Trans. Institute of Mining and Metallurgy*, LVIII, 1948-49, pp. 17-20.

60. See Anon; 'K.G.F.: Landmarks in the History of its Birth and Progress' (typed MSS, K.G.F. Record Room, n.d.), and R.S. Rao, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

61. *Ibid.*, and 'Jubilee of the K.G.F. Group', *The Mining Journal*, May 10, 1930. This story has become something of a popular legend (see the Dewan's address to the Representative Assembly of Mysore during the budget debate of 1930-31, *Procs. Mysore Rep. Assembly*, Bangalore 1932) and has found its way into some of the secondary literature where it is churned out in a somewhat romantic vein. Hetune, *op. cit.*, p. 243, however, comes up with a more nefarious version in that he suggests that the initial pessimism could well have been deliberately engineered (this drastically reducing the quoted value of the equity) so as to allow the eventual shareholders to reap a great windfall gain. Since he has produced no evidence in support of this claim (indeed it would be difficult to imagine how the historian could discover the truth without a much greater knowledge of the 'inside trading' practice of the day) I remain sceptical.

62. From the *Statist* over November 1885—August 1887. The Dissolved Companies Catalogue in Companies House, London, gives an intimation of the firms that were floated during this 'yellow fever' phase, but few details have survived. The P.R.O.'s 'rationalisation' schemes have also wreaked havoc, and it is now all but impossible to probe the Kolar boom with any degree of confidence. The simple listing of companies established over the period has only a limited use and obviously fails to indicate the degree of inter-relationship that undoubtedly existed: thus we have no way of knowing why the Indian Mysore G.M.Co. Ltd. (floated with a nominal capital of £1 million—a ridiculously high figure) was hastily withdrawn, or the reasons for the amalgamation of three concerns, Kolar G.M. Co. Ltd., the Great Southern Mysore Ltd., and the Madras G.M. Co. Ltd. (into the Indian Consolidated Mines Ltd.) in November 1885. From a close reading of second-best sources (the *Mining Manual*, the financial press—particularly the *Statist*, and the first issues of the Stock Exchange, *Official Year Book and Intelligence*), however, this episode was typical of other mineral manias and was characterised by feverish bouts of speculation, a good deal of share price manipulation by a few promoters, re-constituting of companies, a high incidence of inter-locutory directorships, and a considerable amount of property re-scheduling amongst 'sister' companies. It is worth noting, also, that only two companies were registered in India namely, Kaiser-i-Hind (which sank without trace), and Balaghat (Later Balaghat-Mysore, later still Balaghat, see Table 3): the latter was reformed and re-registered in London.

63. Although Champion Reef (1889, see Table 3) was strictly speaking a new company, it was really put together by John Taylor & Sons out of the northern-most parcels of lease area held by the Mysore G.M. Co.—presumably to spread the costs (and returns) over a wider institutional front, (see B.T. 31, 14991 and 29078, P.R.O. Kew). The other com-

A SURVEY OF LAC MANUFACTURES IN SOUTH BIHAR AND BENGAL : 1872-1921

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The name lac is applied to the resinous incrustation formed on the bark of twigs of certain trees, by the action of the lac insect. From the raw brood, i.e. sticklac, was manufactured various commercially viable products called as seedlac, lac-dye, shellac and button lac.¹

In the nineteenth century lac was grown and collected to some extent in the districts of Birbhum, Murshidabad, Malda, Bankura, Midnapur in Bengal and abundantly in all the districts of Chota Nagpur and Santal Parganas in Bihar.² The host trees on which lac insect sustains in these districts are *Kusum*, *palas* and *ber* or *kul*.

Lac was largely used in India for the manufacture of bracelets (*churis*), rings beads and other ornaments and also in the production of turned wood-lacquer work. Sticklac is lac in its natural state. The dye extracted from sticklac is called lac-dye which was used in India till the last quarter of the nineteenth century for colouring purposes. In Bhagalpur, observed Buchanan in 1810, only a small quantity of sticklac was used for making dye and the greater quantity was manufactured into shellac bracelets.³

The Chief uses of shellac in western countrise in the second half of nineteenth century was in the manufacture of hats, sealing wax and varnish. The utility of shellac diversified in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The countries which constituted the principal markets of lacquered products in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were the U.K. and the U.S.A.; smaller quantities were also imported by France, Austria, Germany, Italy, Spain and Holland. Nearly the whole quantity exported went from Bengal and the districts of Bihar.⁴

During the first three quarters of the nineteenth century, lac-dye was an important article of Bengal's foreign trade. Its importance dwindled with the production of synthetic dyes. By the end of the nineteenth century export of lac-dye ceased completely. The export of shellac, however, increased overwhelmingly as the consuming industries became more and more familiar with its properties and possibilities.⁵ We survey the lac producing districts of Bengal and Bihar and discuss the modes and

conditions of lac growing in first section and the marketing of sticklac in second section. We try to give a descriptive account of different types of lac manufactures, their commercial utilities and their marketing operations in third section. In fourth section we analyse the causes of decline of lac-dye production in the areas surveyed and its impact on the producers. The last section shows how shellac production increased phenomenally at the end of the nineteenth and during the first two decades of this century and the forces behind this increase.

1 *Lac Growing*

Tribes and castes such as the Santals, Kols, Paharias, Uraons, Cheros, Kherwars, Bagdis, Bowris, Bhuians, Bhogtas, Samantas, Chamars and Kurmis were engaged in growing lac in the Chotanagpur districts and Santal Parganas in Bihar and in Birbhum, Bankura and Midnapur in Bengal.⁶ Lac growing was a subsidiary occupation to agriculture for these people. It gave them a little extra remuneration and when the price of sticklac fell or when returns of agricultural crops were fairly good, they neglected lac growing altogether.⁷ Each peasant produced only a few pounds of lac.⁸

The best quality of lac could be obtained from *Kusum* trees. But the availability of these trees was limited. Only in Manbhum and Ranchi, *Kusum* trees grew in abundance, but their number was still insignificant when compared with other host trees available and used by the lac growers. In Hazaribagh, Ranchi and Palamau *palas* was the principal host. *Ber* tree was the principal host in singbhum and the Santal Parganas. In Manbhum both *palas* and *ber* were the principal hosts.⁹

It has been argued that like tasar silkworm rearing, lac too was a forest product. But there were important differences in the method of rearing and cultivation and a comparison would not be totally out of place. While the host trees of tasar worm were found exclusively in the forests, those of lac were not forest products alone. *Palas* and *ber* for instance, were found near villages and thus could be easily watched.¹⁰ In size too, the trees were smaller. *Kusum* on the other hand, were large trees, available in forests. Thus lac was not exclusively a forest produce, at least in some districts.

1.1 *Mode of cultivation*

There were regional variations in the system adopted in leasing the right to grow lac. In Hazaribagh, appropriation by the landlord varied from 3/4ths to 7/8ths of the crop. *Banias* or traders also leased large areas

from landlords to secure their own supplies of lac.¹¹ Lac was mostly grown on *palas* trees which abounded in the waste lands.

In the Kolhan Government Estate in Singbhum rents were received in cash and this varied according to the host tree used. No rent was paid for *ber* trees as the quality and quantity of the yield was poor. Rent was charged at one anna per tree for *palas* and four annas for *Kusum*. For lac growing in village forests, the peasants had to pay two annas per tree to the village headman.¹² Here there was no difference in rates possibly because the predominant host in Singbhum was *ber* which abounded in village forests.

In Manbhum, lac growing was more intensive than anywhere else in India. *Ber* and *palas* were the principal hosts here. The peasants enjoyed full right to cultivate lac on the 618,527 *ber* trees, according to the Census enumerations of 1921, in their homesteaded lands and did not pay separate rent for this right. For the 521,640 *palas* and 110,388 *kusum* trees there was no fixed custom.¹³ The landlords leased out the trees in forests and waste lands at a few annas per tree according to size and species.¹⁴

In Ranchi, lac was grown all over the district. Of the 622,220 number of *ber*, *kusum* and *palas* trees infected with the lac insect in 1921, the predominant host was *palas*, which numbered 484,057. The peasants paid rents either in cash or in kind. In the Santal Parganas, the landlord realised one half to 4 annas per tree as rent, whether the tree was on the peasants' holdings or not.¹⁵

In the Government estates of Palamau lac was cultivated by the peasants free of charge. It was decided in 1916 that the trees standing within the cultivated areas of the Government estates should not be assessed for lac growing. Outside the estates, the rate was one or half an anna per tree in suitable blocks leased out for a term of five years.¹⁶ The growing demand for shellac at the turn of this century, gave impetus to the landlords to exact high rents from the peasants growing lac. Lindsay and Harlow reported in 1921 that at Palamau lac was formerly grown free of charge. Now, the landlords having claimed all rights over trees capable of producing lac had thereby annulled the rights of the peasants and charged rates limited only by their discretion and the peasants' need of minimum subsistence. The landlords "usually make a simple verbal settlement with their raiyats from whom they secure as high a rate as possible. . . ."¹⁷ Many landlords have, however, auctioned to the *beparis* the right of lac collection within their estates.

Most of the lac grown in Palamau was on *palas* trees. In 1921, there

were 1,701,010 *palas* trees, whereas the number of *kusum* trees for lac growing was only 4176.¹⁸ Lac growing on *kusum* was not very common, because it was a tree of the forest and not of the open country. Moreover, lac growing on *kusum* involved much care and attention and required much labour and hence was unpopular despite the fact that it yielded a larger quantity and a better quality of lac than *palas*. Further, as Palamau was a field for the recruitment of coolies for tea districts, labour was not so plentiful and the existing labour force was mostly occupied with agriculture.¹⁹

From the above discussion certain points emerge. Conditions of cultivation were oppressive to the lac growers where the landlords had involved themselves in the lac trade. Here, irrespective of the kind of host trees and the quality and quantity of its yield the rents were high, whether in cash or kind. In Hazaribagh, we have noted, the landlords appropriated the produce and reaped enormous profits from marketing the produce themselves. In other areas, however, the rents were not so oppressive as the nature of the host tree was taken into consideration while fixing the rates.

1.2. *Method of lac growing*

The peasants cut off the lac bearing twig which is known as brood lac and tie it to another host tree having young shoots. After some days, the infection of the tree by young insects is complete. Once the insects settle on the soft, succulent branches of the host trees, they create a protective layer of resinous material round their body with the help of their own soft secretion from the glands, which is lac. This manufacture is carried on from the sap juices which the insects suck in from the branches. The male insects which produce very little lac fertilise the female insects and in due time a fresh brood of young insects are ready. The twigs which served as brood are removed and the resinous portion is scraped off for the market. This scraped lac is the sticklac or crude lac of commerce.²⁰ The sticklac may also be obtained by removing the resin incrustations before the brood stage is reached. To differentiate between the two varieties of sticklac, the former is called *phunki* lac and the latter is known as *ari*. *phunki* lac is comparatively light coloured and contains higher percentage of resin compared to *ari* lac, which contains the dead bodies of the nymphs and eggs.²¹

The insects that produce commercial lac are divided into two strains. They are classified as strains because there is no fundamental morphological difference between them, but their behaviour pattern is dissimilar.²² *Kusmi* strain thrives on the *Kusum* trees and produces the best lac for the

market.²³ *Rangini*, the other strain thrives mainly on *ber* or *Kul* and on *palas* trees.²⁴

The lac insect goes through two life cycles in a year. When lac is grown on *kusum* trees, the life cycle differs from that of the insects which thrive on *palas* or *ber* trees. If *kusum* trees are infected with larvae or if larvae from a *kusum* brood are used to infect another tree, in July, the males would emerge in September, two months later; but the period of gestation of the females is prolonged and they do not produce eggs until January or February; these eggs complete the cycle by June-July. *Rangini* strain also completes two life cycles in the year but these are of unequal durations, from June-July to October-November and from October-November to June-July.²⁵ It is not usual to reap more than one crop a year from a given tree. After reaping one crop, peasants did not re-infect the *kusum* trees for one or even two years.²⁶

It is not known how much lac was cultivated in Bengal and South Bihar. For the lac manufactures of Bankura and Birbhum, sticklac was imported from Chota Nagpur,²⁷ though in Birbhum a portion was collected from the forest areas.²⁸ Hunter wrote that, prior to his survey, in 1863, Hazaribagh exported 24,000 maunds of sticklac, of which 16,000 maunds went to Mirzapur, and 8,000 maunds to Raneegunge.²⁹ Mirzapur, a lac manufacturing centre in the United Provinces, received half of its sticklac supplies from Manbhum and the adjoining districts.³⁰ It was observed in 1891 that the largest portion of sticklac from the Chotanagpur division proper went via Sitarampur or Raneegunge by the East Indian Railway to the large lac factory of Jardine, Skinner and Co. at Mirzapur, in the United Provinces.³¹ Dyeing industries of Mirzapur thrived in the first half of the nineteenth century chiefly on the raw material (i.e. sticklac) supplies from Bihar.³²

2. Marketing of sticklac

Generally the *bepari*, a wandering trader, travelled to distant areas selling salt and other commodities and purchasing lac or other local products. He was usually a man of small means and generally worked with advances from the *arhatiya* or broker.

The *arhatiyas* were men of substance and lac-broking was only one of their many activities. These brokers took a commission from the seller at a percentage of the price obtained, usually about 1 percent, and from the buyer at so much per maund of lac bought, usually about one rupee. The purchasers were generally *marwari* dealers who took sticklac to the manufacturing centres.³³

Generally the principal lac manufacturing firms kept their agents in most of the large and small markets to procure sticklac. They also employed *beparis* who wandered round the smaller marts buying lac. For example, Jardine, Skinner and Company had their agents at Shahpur and Latehar in Palamau district. These agents bought sticklac from the local marts of Nawaghar, Garhwa, Cheinpur, Tarhassi and Daltonganj and despatched those by carts and packbullocks to their factory at Imamganj in Gaya district.³⁴

The system of marketing was different in some districts. For example, in the Santal Parganas, *paharias* grew lac mostly from imported brood; these were advanced by the local *mahajans* and the *paharia* peasants were frequently heavily indebted on this account. Here, the *mahajans* took the sticklac and sold it at the local markets.³⁵ In Hazaribagh, the growers of lac disposed of their sticklac either in their own villages or at the local markets to the *beparis*.³⁶ In the case of produce leases, the landlords took the whole of the lac and credited the cultivator with his share against his land rental or against advances of grain or other commodities.³⁷

The principal sticklac markets were Chaibasa, Chakradharpur and Gamaria in Singbhum; Chandil, Manbazar, Chas, Balarampur, Jhalda in Manbhum; Ranchi, Bundu, Lohardaga, Khunti in Ranchi; Daltonganj and Garhwa in Palamau; Chatra in Hazaribagh; Dumka, Pakur in the Santal Parganas.

3. *Lac manufactures and their commercial utility*

Crude lac has practically no uses. It was refined to meet the requirements of the consuming industries. The refined lac was marketed in various forms which had different degrees of purity.

3.1. *Seedlac*

The first step in the refining process was the preparation of seedlac. For this purpose, the sticklac was crushed and washed with water to eliminate most of the impurities. The crushing was carried out by means of *dhenkis*, stone grinders or grooved rollers operated manually in case of small manufactures and with the help of inanimate power in large scale manufactures. The washing was done manually in stone vats or mechanically in barrels. The floating light, woody materials were removed and the purple red filtrate was allowed to drain out. The process was repeated several times so that heavy particles of stone or sand could be removed. The wet seedlac was then dried in the sun and winnowed to remove the residual heavy and light impurities. The product was then sieved, if

necessary and was ready either for the market or for the next operation.³⁸ It was estimated that on an average *kusmi* sticklac yielded 68 percent seedlac, whereas the yield of *rangini* sticklac was 58 percent seedlac.³⁹

3.2. *Lac-dye*

To make lac-dye, alum and alkaline salts were added to the wet seedlac, apparently to heighten the colour. In some districts, alum was not employed; in Lohardaga, for instance, the dye was merely boiled with alkaline or *sajimati* or wood ashes. In Bankura, the brightening of the colour was effected by boiling the dye with lime juice. In other districts, no auxiliary of any kind was employed. The whole mixture was put into another vessel and boiled and was allowed to stand for a day. It was strained through a cloth and the dye was ready for use.⁴⁰

Lac-dye was extensively used for colouring wool, leather and silk.⁴¹ It was commonly applied in *alta*, which is used by the Indian women for colouring the soles of their feet in religious and social ceremonies.⁴²

Lac-dye was manufactured in Birbhum district at Ilambazar at the factories of Farquharson and Campbell, and of Erskine and Company. Besides these there were numerous small scale factories in and around Ilambazar.⁴³ There were several factories at Sonamukhi in Bankura whose lac-dye manufactures were almost entirely exported to Calcutta.⁴⁴ The factory of the Ranchi Lac Company also manufactured lac-dye for the markets of eastern India and for export to the European markets through the Calcutta Port.⁴⁵

3.3. *Shellac and button lac*

The seedlac was taken in a long sausage-shaped cloth bag with was slowly rotated, before glowing charcoal placed in a specially designed fireplace so that maximum heat was concentrated on the bag. The melter then squeezed out the molten lac from the bag. For making shellac, this molten resin was first spread out on the outer surface of a large cylindrical stone-ware bottle which was kept at the desired temperature by partially filling it up with hot water. The plastic sheet thus formed was then gradually stretched before the fire till a large translucent thin sheet was formed. It was then allowed to cool, broken up into flakes and put in a bag for the market. In this indigenous process, three persons usually worked for 6 to 8 hours to produce one maund of shellac. The manufacturing process in large factories was different. A quantity of the melted lac was taken up by a workman in the concavity of a piece of plantain-bark and dexterously flung on to one of the zinc columns. Here the liquid mass was

spread evenly and thinly over the surface, by a man. It began to consolidate at once, and became of a pliable, leathery texture. As soon as the lac was thoroughly consolidated it was taken off by a workman, while still so hot that it would burn the fingers of any person not accustomed to the work. The sheet was placed on a rod held in readiness by a woman, each extremity of the sheet hanged down like a towel on a rack. The next day it was ready for despatch.⁴⁶

Shellac produced smooth, decorative and durable films from its alcoholic solutions which dry rapidly. It was used for wood finishing and furniture polishing. Tanners used it to produce flexible waterproof leather with a glossy finish. Shellac, compounded with rubber, toughens the latter and makes it more resistant to wear; for this reason, it was an essential ingredient in hat manufacturing industries in Britain. It has very good electrical insulation properties. Locally shellac was used for making grinding stones, bangles, toys, bracelets, lacquer work and sealing wax.⁴⁷ For its inherent properties shellac was almost an indispensable material for the manufacture of munitions of war and in the preparation of certain kind of military signalling lights.⁴⁸

If it was intended to produce button lac, the molten lac was dropped in appropriate quantities on a circular metal surface to form circular discs or buttons of 5 to 7.5 cm. in diameter and 6 mm. thick. This was removed when the buttons had hardened. It was solely used for making gramophone records.⁴⁹

The residue in making shellac is commercially known as *Kiri* from which the resin and wax are extracted with suitable solvents. The resin in the form of lumps obtained from *Kiri* is known as garnet lac because of its colour. *Kiri* was widely used in India in the bangle and bracelet making industries.⁵⁰

The lac artisans in Birbhum, called *nuris* produced a variety of lacquered articles, namely cups, inkpots, bracelets and toys of excellent design and craftsmanship.⁵¹ They took advance from the local *mahajans* to carry on their work. But at the time of Sherwill's survey, there were only two families engaged in this occupation.⁵² Ilambazar was the seat of shellac manufactures in Birbhum. There were several European factories at Ilambazar; indigenous small factories were numerous in and around the town. All these factories produced shellac along with lac-dye. The Europeans not only exported the manufactured products from their own factories, but purchased small scale manufactures through their brokers and sent them to Calcutta for shipment abroad.⁵³

In 1882-83, there were 34 lac factories in Bankura, of which 17 were at Sonamukhi, the principal centre of shellac manufacture of the district.⁵⁴ Factories for the manufacture of shellac existed in Bundu and Doranda in Ranchi district. Jhalda was the principal seat of shellac manufacture in Manbhum district.⁵⁵ Factories also existed at Chas, Illu, Balarampur, Manbazer, Chandil, Gobindapur and Raghunathpur in this district. Only these two districts of Chota Nagpur had lac factories.⁵⁶ It was found that nearly 7000 maunds of shellac per annum was exported from Dumka in the Santal Parganas. There were other factories in the neighbourhood of Dumka and at Pakur, while lacquered bangles were manufactured at Nunihat and few other places in 1906.⁵⁷

3.4. *Marketing of manufactured lac*

A chain of intermediaries were involved in the trade in manufactured lac. The brokers who supplied sticklac to the small manufacturers were sometimes appointed by the shippers engaged in transporting lac to the foreign countries. The whole chain depended on a set of contracts and a system of advances. Even the small manufacturer frequently received advances from a Calcutta broker.⁵⁸

Trade in lac, particularly shellac, was subject to heavy fluctuations for two reasons. First, as lac production was a subsidiary occupation of the peasants and partly as a forest product the supply was not steady. Even where lac was grown on *palas* trees, the susceptibility of *palas* to attack by insects added to the instability in supply.⁵⁹ Secondly, market manipulations in the United States, where the demand was very high, also caused instability.

According to the Indian Trade Returns, the U.S.A. and the U.K. predominated in the shellac, seedlac, button lac and sticklac trade of India. Germany was usually the largest buyer of 'other sorts' including waste and refuse. These low grade 'other sorts' were used for making cheap varnish which was to a great extent exported to India.⁶⁰

4. *Decline of lac dye*

During the last two decades of the nineteenth century, lesser attention was given to the manufacture of lac-dye. Lac-dye ceased to be remunerative as cochineal was rapidly taking its place in Europe and aniline dyes in the local markets.⁶¹ It was observed in 1907 that previously manufacture of lac-dye represented the profit of the lac factories; but during the first decade of the twentieth century the greatest difficulty was to clear the stocks of lac-dye.⁶² The price of lac-dye in the Calcutta market fell from

Rs. 85 per maund to only Rs. 16 per maund in the late seventies of the nineteenth century.⁶⁸

Formerly lac-dye was much in use in dyeing the scarlet tunics of the British army, hunting coats, etc. Cochineal had almost entirely superseded it for the former purpose. In the Indian market, aniline and alizarine dyes were substituting lac-dye for dyeing woollen shawls, silk fabrics, etc.⁶⁴ Increasing import of this article brings out the picture clearly. Imports into the port of Calcutta was 120 maunds in 1878-79 ; it rose to 1139 maunds in 1887-88, and the total quantity was 10144 maunds in 1899-1900 (see table 1).⁶⁵ Lac-dye was completely replaced by aniline and alizarine dyes for dyeing purposes.

A vernacular journal noted in 1905 that lac-dye production was in crisis in Bankura also. In Sonamukhi, there were 75 factories in 1876 manufacturing lac-dye and shellac. In 1882-83 the number of lac factories, manufacturing only shellac, had come down to 17. As this period coincides with the decline of lac-dye export, decline in production must have been the cause of winding up of many factories.⁶⁶ The previous practice of colouring of women's feet by *alta* made from lac dye was declining fast.⁶⁷ This argument put forward in *Krishak* needs some clarification. Colouring of women's feet by *alta* is still common in Eastern India. What was actually changing was the substitution of lac-dye in *alta* by synthetic colours.

According to official estimates, 1200 maunds of lac-dye was manufactured in Birbhum in 1883,⁶⁸ but the production fell to 600 maunds in 1887.⁶⁹ From the *Divisional Commissioner's Report*, we find that the production of lac-dye was only 238 maunds in 1896-97.⁷⁰ By 1912, production of lac-dye had completely stopped in the district and the entire sticklac was manufactured into shellac.⁷¹

During the First World War when imports of synthetic dye were disrupted there was a proposal for the revival of the indigenous product. It was, however, discarded on the ground that though lac-dye yielded fast colours and was suitable for dyeing wool and silk, it lacked brilliancy. On this account it was displaced by cochineal which gave similar shades but of greater purity.⁷²

The decline of lac-dye is reflected in the export figures of lac dye from Bengal Presidency to the United Kingdom (see table 2). It fell from 14411 maunds in 1875-76 to 7937 maunds in 1880-81. It fell further to 1239 maunds in 1885-86. During the last decade of the century, there was almost no export of lac-dye ; for example, 20 maunds only were exported

in 1895-96, and only 8 maunds in 1898-99. During the twentieth century there was no item of lac-dye exports in the *Annual Accounts of Sea-borne Trade from the Bengal Presidency*.⁷³

5. Growth of shellac manufactures

Trade in shellac became important from the last decade of the nineteenth century. Cumming reported in 1908 that lac was gathered not for its dye as earlier, but for its resinous properties.⁷⁴ It may be noted here that in the nineteenth century both lac-dye and shellac were manufactured in the lac factories. In Manbhum there were 21 lac factories in 1886 providing employment to 936 persons.⁷⁵ The number of factories doubled within a decade.⁷⁶ In 1909, there were 118 factories in this district employing approximately 6000 persons. This growth of shellac manufacture in a district within a period of twenty four years is suggestive of its viability.⁷⁷

In 1891, there were 7 lac factories in Ranchi district — one at Ranchi proper, belonging to an English firm, five at Bundu and one at Arki in Tamar. The number of persons employed in the Ranchi factory in 1887-88 was 123.⁷⁸

In 1883, there was no lac factory at the Santal Parganas.⁷⁹ But the demand for shellac helped manufacturers to establish two lac factories at Dumka, four at Nunihat, two at Jarmundi and two at Haripur. Although these factories were small, they were combinedly capable of refining the whole of the lac produced at Dumka area.⁸⁰

The total number of lac factories in 1911 in the districts of the Santal Parganas, Hazaribagh, Ranchi, Palamau, Manbhum and Singhbhum was 46 and 2619 skilled and unskilled workmen were engaged in them. Within a decade, the number of factories increased to 84, employing 3686 skilled and unskilled workmen.⁸¹ Compared to other accounts on the number of shellac factories, the returns of the Census of 1911 seem to be under-estimates. In 1909, for instance, there were 118 lac factories in Manbhum; but according to the Census of 1911 there were only 24 factories.⁸² Obviously therefore, we can say, the numerous small factories existing in the districts were not taken into consideration.

Furthermore, even in the case of factories recorded in the Census enumerations in 1911 and 1921, there were presumably many small factories employing only a few workmen. It was pointed out in 1911 that only two factories using mechanical power employed 250 persons, which means that 44 other factories employed at an average 54 workmen. In view of the growth in shellac trade, Indian entrepreneurs with nominal

capital set up numerous factories. From the number of persons employed in 1921 it appears that the employment per factory was much less than in 1911.⁸³

In the nineteenth century the internal market for shellac was limited to the manufacture of certain lacquered wares. Catering almost exclusively to the export market, production of shellac increased since the beginning of this century. Shellac was used in the manufacture of gramophone records, in the tanning industry, for wood finishing and furniture polishing, for making smooth, decorative and durable films, as an insulating material in the electrical industries and in the manufacture of munitions and fireworks, on account of its waterproofing qualities.⁸⁴

Annual trade returns reflect growth of shellac from the five year period of 1880-81 to 1884-85 (see table 3). But the real upward trend is noticed from 1895-96 to 1899-1900, in which it rose to 234128 maunds on an average, compared to the previous five yearly (1890-91 to 1894-95) average figure of 148520 maunds. During the first decade of this century, the exports were 319249 maunds on an average.⁸⁵ Even the World War had little effects on the export of shellac because of its uses in the manufacture of munitions and fireworks.

6. Conclusion

Certain broad conclusions can be derived from our study. First, production of synthetic dyes in Europe and increasing export to Bengal ruined both the internal and external market of lac-dye. Secondly, export of shellac, catering almost exclusively to the export market, increased. The real spurt in the shellac trade is evident from 1895-96 onwards. The trade figures of lac-dye and shellac reveal that the period and degree of decline (see table 2 col. 4) of one manufactured item did not coincide with the growth of another manufactured item. As more than a decade (from 1880-81 to 1895-96) intervened between the decline of one manufactured item and the growth of another, this must have caused some dislocation and suffering to the poor and small producers. Thirdly, from the differences in the labour process in the manufacturing of lac-dye and shellac it is evident that shellac manufacture required a proportion of skilled labour. It can be argued that transfer of workforce which had been engaged in lac-dye production to shellac manufacture was limited. There is evidence that artisans or labourers who had been engaged in lac-dye manufacture sought subsistence in agriculture when production of lac-dye declined. Lastly, a stable home market for the product provides some security to the manufacturers. But the growth of shellac was 'export oriented'. The viability of the manufacture depended on the persistence of a steady foreign

demand. A sudden change in that demand would definitely affect the poor producers immensely. During the period of our study it is evident that the manufacture was prone to instability due to uncertainties of demand.

TABLE I

Import of aniline and alizarine dyes (dyeing and colouring materials) from foreign ports into the port of Calcutta from 1878-79 to 1919-20

Year	Quantity in maunds ^a	Year	Quantity in maunds ^a
(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
1878-79	120	1900-1901	8092
1879-80	438	1901-02	8761
1880-81	747	1902-03	7284
1881-82	539	1903-04	12029
1882-83	702	1904-05	11628
1883-84	1122	1905-06	9377
1884-85	1399	1906-07	14613
1885-86	1327	1907-08	14757
1886-87	1256	1908-09	12040
1887-88	1139	1909-10	12302
1888-89	1334	1910-11	16211
1889-90	2043	1911-12	15186
1890-91	2502	1912-13	16074
1891-92	3478	1913-14	17967
1892-93	2896	1914-15	8049
1893-94	4914 ^b	1915-16	777
1894-95	3050	1916-17	531
1895-96	5427	1917-18	563
1896-97	3959	1918-19	552
1897-98	7632	1919-20	1425
1898-99	10600		
1899-1900	10144		

Notes: (a) All the figures have been converted from lbs. into maunds.

(b) Figures for alizarine dyes were given from 1893-94; prior to 1893-94, the figures given are only of aniline dyes.

Source: *Annual Statement of Sea-borne Trade of the Bengal Presidency with Foreign Countries and the ports of India, between 1878-79 and 1919-20, Calcutta.*

TABLE 2

Exports of lac-dye from the port of Calcutta into foreign countries, between 1875-76 and 1899-1900

Year	Quantity in maunds	Five-yearly averages of col. (2)	Index of col. (3)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
1875-76	14411		
1876-77	13669		
1877-78	13014		
1878-79	11228		
1879-80	18508	14166	100
1880-81	7987		
1881-82	5783		
1882-83	5234		
1883-84	1356		
1884-85	122	4086	29
1885-86	1239		
1886-87	513		
1887-88	Nil		
1888-89	54		
1889-90	1	361	2
1890-91	Nil		
1891-92	Nil		
1892-93	Nil		
1893-94	Nil		
1894-95	Nil	Nil	Nil
1895-96	20		
1896-97	Nil		
1897-98	1		
1898-99	8		
1899-1900	Nil	6	Neg.

Note: The figures have been converted from cwt. into maunds.

Source: *Annual Statement of the Sea-borne Trade and Navigation of the Bengal Presidency with Foreign Countries and Indian Ports, between 1876-77 and 1899-1900, Calcutta.*

TABLE 3

*Five-yearly averages of export of shellac from the port of Calcutta into foreign ports,
from 1875-76 to 1919-20*

Year	Quantity in Maunds	Index of col. (2)
(1)	(2)	(3)
1875-76 to		
1879-80	75376 ^a	100
1880-81 to		
1884-85	121277	161
1885-86 to		
1889-90	143510	190
1890-91 to		
1894-95	148520	197
1895-96 to		
1899-1900	234128	311
1900-01 to		
1904-05	237731	315
1905-06 to		
1909-10	400767	532
1910-11 to		
1914-15	438349	582
1915-16 to		
1919-20	411340	546

Note: (a) This is a four-yearly average figure, as the figures for 1875-76 is not available.

Source: *Annual Statement of the Sea-borne Trade and Navigation of the Bengal Presidency with Foreign Countries and Indian Ports*, between 1875-76 and 1919-20, Calcutta.

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14. Lindsay and Harlow, "Lac and shellac", p. 126.
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SWADESHI PAPER INDUSTRY IN COLONIAL BENGAL

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In India during ancient times when the use of paper was unknown to human civilisation, materials such as palm-leaves, birch bark, bhurja were used for writing. The method of writing on leaves and bark is now lost to us. Besides leaves and bark, stones, brick, wooden boards, chips of bamboo and metal plates were also in vogue. Gradually, with the progress of civilisation, paper was invented, and the method of producing it spread from the country of its origin to all the countries of the world.

It has now become an accepted fact that China was the motherland of paper. The probable date of its invention is 106 AD. In those times, pieces of torn cloth, leaves etc. were used as raw materials for hand-made paper. The Arabs defeated the Chinese in 751 AD at the battle of Samarkand and learnt the art of paper-making. It was after this that the Moors of Spain spread it to other countries. The Indians learnt the art from the Chinese. It was probably in Kashmir that paper was first introduced. Since a solution of starch made by boiling sunned rice is used for sizing the paper, it was known as 'tulat' paper. With the introduction of paper, the use of palm-leaves and birch-bark started to decrease. The word 'kagaj' (i.e. paper) is of Persian origin, and this word came to be used from that time. Thus there is every likelihood that paper was introduced in India by the Muslims.¹ At the beginning of the present century, a Sanskrit manuscript belonging to the 11th century was found at Kathmandu. The paper on which it was written was known as 'Nepal paper' which was made from bamboo and the bark of a small thorny shrub known as Mahadev's flower (*Daphne Cannabina*). The paper was made thicker by being coated over with a paste, made from the boiled kernal of tamarind seed which made the paper look almost like a piece of hide. Although the Daphne paper was known as Nepal paper, it was made mostly not in Nepal, but in Bhutan despite the fact that the Bhutias used another plant (Diah) for this purpose.²

Process of Manufacture

The process of manufacture of hand-made paper differs from one area to another. There was a difference here between West Bengal and East

*The term 'paper' is derived from 'papyrus' — a well-known plant, once extensively used by the Egyptians for making articles such as baskets, shoes, cordage and the like.

Bengal, between both and Bihar, as also between bark paper and jute paper. Let us discuss them in turn. The process of manufacture in Bengal, particularly West Bengal, was as follows :—

To begin with, waste paper was mixed with lime and steeped for a period of 7 to 10 days in an earthen pot. Three or four seers of lime were needed for 1 maund of waste paper. When sufficiently softened in this way, the mass was pounded under a dhenki over a stone mortar. The dhenki used here was somewhat similar to that used for husking paddy, though larger and heavier. The paste was then kneaded in another pot by trampling under the feet like potter's clay. The paste was then washed over a piece of cotton cloth and a soft pulp was thereby obtained. The pulp was mixed with water in a large vat, and continuously stirred with an iron rod so that the pulp did not settle down ; then the solution was sifted on a *chhapri* (sieve), measuring 23" by 18". In this way, the *chhapri* was covered with thin films of fibres which were placed on a stone one upon the other and films of paper thus formed a pile. This was generally done in the morning and the papers were left untouched throughout the day and night, so that water drains away. In the next morning, sheets of paper were separately dried in the sun. The sheets were sized and then starched on one side with the help of boiled sunned rice applied with spongy fibrous shell of a *dhundul*, *nenua* or *vurul* along with blue stone or copper sulphate in a powdered form so that the paper lasted long. In paper-making, all the members of the family — men and women — were engaged ; however, there was division of labour. As starching was a comparatively light work, it was left to the women. The tasks of exposing the dried sheets to the night dew, or pressing over a plank next morning were also done by women. The paper was then ready for use. The paper was generally white ; sometimes, however, blue or yellow paper was also made. To make blue paper, blue was mixed in the vat, whereas to bring yellow colour, yellow powder was mixed in the starch.

It should be kept in mind that paper-making instruments were of a primitive kind — a number of earthen vats, dhenki, wooden frame, a bamboo sieve, log, mats for drying the sheets, a smooth stone for pressing the paper etc. Of these articles, efficiency was needed only for making the *chhapri*. It was made in Serampore, Hooghly, and had a life of about 2½ to 3 months.³

It is evident from the report of D.N. Mukherjee that a man could make 175 to 200 sheets of paper per day and have a monthly income of Rs. 6 to 12. It has been calculated that 30 seers of deshi paper could be produced out of 1 maund of refuse paper. The price of paper depended on its size. As for example, *Bara rukhi* (12 fingers width) was priced Re. 1

per quire, *Sola rukhi* or *jangri* (16 fingers width) Re. 1 per 4/5 quires, *Biara* (used in zamindari seristas) Re. 1 per 8/9 quires, and *Baleswari* white or blue paper (comparatively thicker paper made only at Amta, district Howrah) Re. 1 per 2 quires.⁴

While in present-day West Bengal, the raw material used was refuse paper (bark and jute must also have been in use), in the Kamrup district of Assam, the art of making bark paper was well-known. There the bark of *Sachi* tree was extensively used. In Bengal, it is known as agar. The *Sachi* bark was first boiled in water and then dried in the sun. The outer portion was then removed and the bark paper cut into several sizes. Each piece was folded, beaten with a stone, made soft and after that, split into pieces. These pieces were then soaked in the water and dried in the shade and then pressed down by a weight. Each piece was then polished either with sand paper or the seed of a creeping plant, known as *Shila*. Then a paste was prepared from the grains of *Matikali* plant, which gave a yellow colour and the polished pieces of paper were then dyed yellow in the paste. The pieces were dried in the sun and made ready for use.

Apart from *Matikali*, *Sachi* barks were also in use in different areas of Assam. Referring to the paper made of *Sachi* bark, J.N. Gupta, in his *Monograph*, wrote :—

“It is said that the paper is very strong and sometimes lasts for centuries. When, after a lapse of years, the writing grows indistinct, the paper is rubbed with a strip of cloth moistened with water, and the writing becomes quite clear again. When the writing is totally effaced, the paper is rubbed over with the leaves of the fig tree, and it becomes again fit for fresh use”.⁵ The bark of *Agallcha* was also used for the same purpose. It was found in Cachar, Sylhet, Darrang, Jorehat, Sibsagar, Nanipur, Khasi Hills, Naga Hills and Tripura.⁶ Dr. O.O. Williams made a survey of the Karimganj sub-division of Assam. He reported that the Brahmins of that area used paper made of the bark of *Pihakaora*.⁷

It should be noted that unlike Assam, where bark paper was used, in Eastern Bengal, jute paper was produced. J.N. Gupta has given a detailed account of the process of manufacture of jute paper in his monograph. Fibres of *mechat* jute were first soaked in lime water, then dried in the sun. The same process was repeated thrice in a row. They were cleared of lime stone and then pounded in a dhenki. Wrapped in a piece of sack cloth, the powdered substance was then made to move to and fro in water and a diluted pulp was thereby obtained. A sort of lattice was then placed on a framework and passed through the pulp 3 or 4 times, and on this a thin film of paper was deposited. This layer was overturned on a bamboo matting. These layers were then dried in the sun, smeared with

a mixture of rice-flour and water and dried again. Each layer thus became a sheet of paper and after being polished with a stone, was ready for sale in the market⁸ In the Attesk sub-division of Mymensingh district, the same process of manufacture was in vogue in the second decade of the 19th century.⁹

Paper was also manufactured in parts of Bihar. A.D. Martin has given a description of how that was carried on at Patna in 1800, which was, to some extent, similar to the process of manufacture in other areas. He wrote :—"At Bihar the paper most commonly made is that called Duftari which is 19 by 17½" a sheet, and that is used in common business, but other kinds of a larger size and rather superior quality, are made, when commissioned . . . The expenses and profits of making 7 reams are as follows :—

"42 seers (86½ lbs) of old bags, Rs. 2 ; 42 seers impure soda, Rs. 2 ; 42 seers lime for making the ley, Re. 1 ; labourers for beating with the Dhenki, Rs. 1 As. 12 ; a man to stir about the materials, As. 8 ; pasting and smoothing the paper with a stone, As. 5 ; flour and fire-wood for making the paste, As. 2, 6 pies ; drying the sheets, As. 4 ; cutting the paper, 6 pies ; total Rs. 8.

"The ream consists of 10 quires, each containing 24 sheets and sells by wholesale at Rs. 9½. So that the maker has Re. 1½ profit. He does nothing but forms the sheets, taking them as usual from the cistern on a frame which retains the paper and allows the water to escape. He makes about 1 ream a day ; and if he works 315 days in the year, he will earn about Rs. 80 a year and, in fact, these people are in easy circumstances. In the 30 houses in Bihar are 100 men, and the 13 divisions, exclusive of Arwal, that are in the district, there are probably 40 houses, in all 140 men, who at the rate above mentioned, will make paper to the value of Rs. 32,000 a year . . ."¹⁰

It appears from the accounts that capitalist manufacture made its appearance in the paper industry of Bengal. It is true that 'artisan production', which, according to Lenin, was "the production of articles to the order of a consumer"¹¹ existed in Bengal. Here the products were sold on the market as commodities, even if exchange of paper for other products was not totally absent. The system of paper manufacture in Bengal was, like some other industries,¹² marked by cooperation based on division of labour, handicraft still continuing to be its basis and the *kagjis* working for wages in the workshops.

Hand-made Paper industry of Bengal

In Bengal, the process of paper manufacture remained more or less the same for several years. Year after year, the *kagjis* of Bengal, with the

same kind of technical knowledge, stuck to their hereditary occupation. Paper was produced in a number of districts, such as Howrah, Hooghly, Murshidabad, Pabna, Dacca, Chittagong and Bogura. In Howrah, the industry was 400 years' old. It is said that a person, Lokman Hakim by name, introduced this art in village Mainan under P.S. Amta sometime in the Mughal period.¹³ In the 1860s, 100 *kagji* families lived in the district.¹⁴ Uptil now, we do not have any detailed information about the process of paper manufacture, industrial organisation or the types of paper made there. In the district of Hooghly, on the other, there were a number of villages where paper-making centres existed. It was generally believed that paper made at Parambo was qualitatively better than that made in other centres. Paper was produced also in village Neela, P.S. Pandua, village Shahbazar, P.S. Dhaniakhali and Balidewanganj under Arambagh sub-division. The paper produced in these centres was generally used to make account-books for the businessmen. One hundred sheets were sold at Rs. 10.¹⁵ These were old centres, existing definitely from the early 19th century. Areas such as Saptagram, Mahanad, Pandua, Kholsha and Dewanganj were the centres of *tulat* paper. This paper was used for common purposes and exported to different areas of Bengal. The name 'Bali paper' — a well-known household name of Bengal — is derived from the name of village Bali where paper was made. The *kagji* Muslims of Dashghara, Dyayadanda and other places also made this kind of paper.¹⁶ At the initial stages, the *kagjis* of Howrah and Hooghly used fish-catching net to make brown paper; in later years, however, waste paper was used as the only raw-material.¹⁷ Some villages of Murshidabad were also inhabited by *kagjis*, e.g. Keshtopur and Srirampur under Jangipur sub-division. There brown paper was made with hemp as the raw material.¹⁸

This hand-made paper was basically thick and account books were mostly used by the merchants and zamindars. One of the leading purchasers of this paper was the Maharaja of Burdwan. Moreover, astrologers also used it for making horoscopes. At the time of the Bengali New Year, there was a rise in the demand for these account books among the businessmen, and these books were also sold in large quantities. The most important feature of this paper was that it had a much longer life than machine-made paper.¹⁹

In paper manufacture, the districts of East Bengal did not lag behind West Bengal. We have come to know from J. N. Gupta's account that in village Kaliha-Kandapara, P.S. Serajganj, district Pabna, jute paper of one variety was made by 15 families; however, no family was entirely dependent on this industry. They were part-time *kagjis* spending some part of the year in this sector, and keeping the other free to do some other work. The *kagjis* were busy particularly during winter; and in that season each

family had an average income of Rs. 70. Thick and durable, the paper was in great demand among the local mahajans and Marwari businessmen. Lalit Chandra Guha, the Deputy Magistrate of Serajganj, was of the view that businessmen used this paper because they preferred not to give up an old practice.

While the business was paying in Serajganj, it was otherwise in Chittagong. In Kagjipara under P.S. Patia, two kinds of paper were made, which were definitely thinner and with which kites and fireworks were produced. In the first decade of the present century when J.N. Gupta made his survey, there were 22 families of kagjis, but none of these families totally depended upon this profession for their living. The income was meagre, each earning an average of Rs. 4. The probability is that paper of better quality was manufactured in this district in the earlier days.²⁰

Paper-making centres were started in other districts also. Prakash Chandra Roy of village Chhatian, under Habiganj sub-division in Sylhet, and Satish Chandra Kundu of village Kanchanpur under Aadamdighi thana in Bogura were paper-makers of repute in their own districts, and both of them were said to have learnt this art from Kashmir.²¹ Shalyapur and Chapapur were the names of two villages where both *tulat* and ordinary paper was manufactured. In the mid-19th century, there were 50 *kagji* families who "living a pretty comfortable life in those days of cheap living", each earning about Rs. 15 per month.²² There were also other individual attempts. Durgacharan Sarkar of village Debkola under P.S. Iswarchandra in the district of Mymensingh not only made paper, but also paper-made articles of common use.²³ J.N. Gupta in his monograph, has given the cost-price and sale-price per ream of hand-made jute paper in the districts of Pabna, Chittagong and Manipur. That is as follows:—

TABLE 1

<i>District</i>	<i>Cost price</i> (Rs. As.)	<i>Sale price</i> (Rs. As.)
Pabna	7-00	14-00
large—	2-00	2-80
Chittagong		
small—	1-00	1-40
Manipur	20-00	30-00

Source : J.N. Gupta : *Monograph on Paper-making and Papier-mache in the province of Eastern Bengal & Assam*. General Deptt. (Misc. Br.) FN : 6M/5 Prgs. B 215-17, May 1909.

Dharmananda Mahabharati, in an article, has given a list of the sizes and prices of different types of deshi paper, as is evident from the following table :—

TABLE 2

<i>Name</i>	<i>Size</i> fingers	<i>Price (Re)</i> distas
Bararukhi	40	12
Sonarukhi	56	5
Boira	56	8½
Baleswari	large — thick, durable, smooth	2
Hogla	38 fingers, blue- coloured, made at Hooghly	6

Source : Dharmananda Mahabharati, *Kagaj-o-Kagajer Karbar*, in *Krishak*, Aswin 1316, pp. 128-33.

The most important centre of paper manufacture in Bengal was Areal, a village under Bikrampur sub-division in the district of Dacca. It was a very old paper-making centre and the *kagjis* were whole-time paper-makers. It started with 7 families we do not know exactly when and they lived initially in the eastern side of the village. Later, however, as population increased, they began to settle in other parts of the village. Like many other rural industries, family labour, the labour of artisans and their women and children, was employed.²⁴ In Sonarang, the neighbouring village, there was an image-making workshop. When that workshop came into disuse, the *kagjis* of Areal collected large stones from its ruins, and they used those as tools in paper-making.²⁵ Before the setting up of mills by foreigners, about 250 Mahammedan families were totally dependent on this industry.²⁶ At Areal, paper of different types and sizes were manufactured, and was used for making exercise books, greetings cards, books and book covers.²⁷ In reality, it served the needs of the literate people.

Setting-up of Foreign paper mills

With the establishment of British rule, the condition of hand-made paper industry of Bengal began to change for the worse. A number of paper mills owned and managed by foreigners were set up in different parts of Bengal in the 2nd half of the 19th century, thereby resulting in the decline of deshi paper industry. We do not maintain that the decline started

immediately, but the process began from then, though it took a long time for the people to give up the practice of using deshi paper in favour of foreign paper.

Before the setting up of mills the Government started making enquiries into the viability of establishing mills in India suitable for paper-making and pointed out that "... while India produces a large number of fibrous plants partly in a wild state, no advantage of any importance is derived from the produce ... the local manufacture of paper is quite insignificant in comparison with the capacities of the country".²⁸ Dr. G. Bedie, Superintendent of the Government Central Museum at Madras specified 18 plants as being useful for the purpose²⁹— 1. Mellow family : 7 types ; 2. Pod-bearing family : 2 types ; 3. Asclepiad family : 2 types ; 4. Lace-bark family : 1 type ; 5. Nettle family : 4 types ; 6. Palm family : 3 types ; 7. Screw-pine family : 1 type ; 8. Pily family : 2 types ; 9. Plantain family : 1 type ; 10. Amaryllis family : 1 type ; 11. Pine-apple family : 1 type ; 12. Jute : 2 types ; 13. Saccharum Munja ; 14. Saccharum Sara ; 15. Flax ; 16. Rice-straw ; 17. Bamboos and 18. Refuge of the sugarcane.

It should be pointed out that a number of these plants were available in abundance in India and some of them were actually used for the purpose. For example, as we have already mentioned, jute paper industry was very general throughout Eastern Bengal. In 1869, Dr. Mouat, an advocate of a jail paper industry, wrote :—"India abounds in fibres far more suitable for paper-making than jute ; and as those fibres are procurable at a very small cost, there ought to be no reason, physical or economical, why paper should not, with suitable machinery, be made at a much cheaper rate than it can be imported from abroad, where the raw material—rags—is daily becoming more costly".³⁰ Regarding indigenous materials for paper manufacture in the Hazaribagh district, the Superintendent of Central Jail wrote in 1878 that "Munj grows in Gya and Sahabad and the sub-division of Palamow".³¹ Some time later in the same year, he wrote :—"Since writing the letter above referred to ... I have discovered in and near the station some patches of a plant" which resembled Munj.³² He also stated : "Of the jungle plants 'Madar', 'Khur', 'Bhabur' mentioned by you, the first 'Madar' grows readily in all the adjacent jungles".³³ Referring to the Muse textiles (plantain tree), Dr. Doyle mentioned that "... in Dacca the fibre is separated by the Natives, and is used by them for making the string of the bow ...".³⁴ All these enquiries made the foreign investors realise that there were enough scope for them to get good returns here.

It may be noted in passing that in one sense, the differences between hand-made and machine-made paper resemble those between hand-made

cloth and machine-made cloth. While the former is made in separate sheets of limited sizes, machine-made paper, though limited in width, runs from the machine in long rolls frequently more than a mile at a stretch without any break.

The use of advanced technology in paper industry can be traced to the second half of the 19th century, although in the first half, the Christian missionaries set up the first paper mill in Serampore. In 1870, the *Bally Paper Mill* was formed under British ownership and management. It is notable that fibre extracted from plantain was first introduced for paper-making in this mill.³⁵ There white printing paper, writing paper, blotting paper and brown paper were produced under the management of G. Henderson & Co.³⁶ This company was closed down in 1905. In 1882, the *Titagarh Paper Mills Co. Ltd.* was set up at Titagarh with F.W. Heilgers & Co. as the managing agent. It manufactured printing paper, foolscap paper, cartridge, blotting and brown paper.³⁷ Then in 1884, under the management of Balmer, Lawrie & Co. was formed the *Bengal Paper Mills*, where paper of different types was made.³⁸ Again, the *Imperial Paper Co.* was set up between 1892 and 1894 at Kankinara, which later came under the ownership of Titagarh Paper Mills.³⁹

Compradors

It should be noted that for some of the raw materials such as jute, hemp etc, used in these mills, the foreign companies depended on compradors and native agents. One such comprador merchant was Harishchandra Bose. Born in Calcutta in 1855, he started life as a school teacher, and then shifted to the business of buying and selling of daily necessities. After some time, he started dealing in salt-petre, thereby accumulating more money. He realised that street-rags could become an important raw-material for paper-making, and he employed rag-pickers for this purpose. Huge quantities of rags were supplied by him to the foreign mills of Serampore. Not only did he establish business connections with the British, but also with the American paper manufacturers. Possibly some time in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, he made a contract with C.J. Bancroft, an American paper manufacturer, to export street-rags to America. It is these compradorial ties with the foreign manufacturers that sustained his growth. For this particular business, he was known as *Nyakra Harish* (Harish, the rag-picker). He died on 15 May, 1917.⁴⁰ After his death, *The Englishman* published the following report: "... It was he who initiated the idea of collecting street-rags for the manufacture of paper. These he supplied to the Serampore Paper Mills and subsequently shipped ... to the American market and thus made a fortune"⁴¹

Meanwhile, with the setting-up of paper mills under foreign ownership the import of paper from abroad also increased. Paper was imported into India not only from Britain, but also from countries like Germany, Austria, Hungary, Norway, Belgium, Sweden and Holland.⁴²

De-industrialisation

When mill-made paper flooded the deshi market, the market of hand-made deshi paper got a setback. *Faridpur Hitaishana*, one of the well-known vernacular journals of the period, referred to the decline of paper industry at Areal and lamented that Areal paper had lost its market after the setting-up of the Bally mill and that the *kagjis* had been thinking about taking up other professions.⁴³ Himangshu Mohan Chattopadhyay wrote: "When paper made at the Bally mill was sent to the market, the living conditions of the *kagjis* became crisis-ridden".⁴⁴ When D. N. Mukerjee, the Deputy Collector, visited these centres, he witnessed the same picture. At village Mainan, under Uluberia sub-division, district Howrah, the number of *kagji* families diminished from 100 to 6. This decline was due partly to the breaking out of malaria in rural Bengal, and partly to foreign competition. There was a paper manufacturing centre at Sahabad which also went into oblivion during the second half of the 19th century. The picture was the same at Cuttack. It was reported by the Collector of Cuttack that this centre died out of existence at the turn of the century. There was a large manufacturing centre at village Shahbazar under Tarakeswar sub-division in Hooghly where 70 *dhenkis* were in operation; in the early 20th century, however, it decreased to 2.⁴⁵ One gets the same picture from Cumming's report also.⁴⁶

Swadeshi Movement and Swadeshi Paper Industry

There is no dispute about the fact that the Swadeshi movement against the partition of Bengal in 1905 and the call for the boycott of British goods in favour of indigenous ones helped in the revival and growth of Swadeshi industries. While this was prominent in industries such as cotton textiles, steam navigation, tobacco, tanning and leather works, drugs and chemicals, match, etc,⁴⁷ this revival was, if not totally absent, not so evident in paper industry. When D.N. Mukherjee made his survey, he failed to notice any revival in this field. He attributed it partly to its being unsuitable for common use, and partly to its limited supply.⁴⁸

In fact, it was nearly impossible for hand-made paper to compete with mill-made paper. What was needed was the establishment of Swadeshi paper mills, where paper of advanced quality suitable for daily use, could

be supplied in substantial quantities. In Orissa, the first attempt in this field was made by a big feudal lord — the Maharajah of Mayurbhanj.⁴⁹ At the beginning of the present century, the Mayurbhanj Paper Mills Co. was set up with an initial capital of Rs. 16 lakhs, one-third of which was invested by him. There for the first time, western technology was introduced. The mill was built at a place called Baripada on the banks of the river Buribalam, one probable reason for this being the availability of *sabai* grass as rawmaterial.⁵⁰ Apart from zamindars, professional people also took an active interest in these ventures. Sailapada Chattopadhyay, a Professor of Burdwan Raj College and advocate, formed the *City Paper & Board Mill* at Cossipore, Calcutta, where paper boards of different kinds were made. This was the first of its kind in India. Its products were needed particularly by government offices; in fact, paper boards were regularly supplied to the Stationery Department of the government.⁵¹

The mills of Mayurbhanj and Cossipore were comparatively of larger size, formed along modern lines with substantial capital. There were also a number of small firms which turned out commodities of diverse kinds. One could not expect to see writing paper being produced in these workshops; in those centres, envelopes, cardboard boxes (used by confectionaries and others) etc. were made. Ramesh Chandra Chakraborty of Dacca used to make envelopes with a very small capital. His small workshop provided employment opportunities to 4 workers, each of whom earned Rs. 10 every month. These envelopes were of different sizes and had some demand in the local markets of Dacca.⁵² Although it was an envelope-making centre, we do not have any specific knowledge about the source wherefrom paper was procured for use in that centre. If they did not make paper on their own — and that was more likely — they purchased either deshi hand-made paper or cheap foreign paper. There were several other individual attempts. Carbon paper of different types was made by *N. Mukherjee & Co.* of 21, Radhabazar Street, Calcutta.⁵³ Bankimbihari Roy of Darjeeling set up a small firm where deshi tracing paper and black carbon paper were made.⁵⁴ Suryanarayan Das of Barabazar, district Bankura, introduced a new variety in this field by producing sand paper.⁵⁵ We suffer from lack of information about this venture; still it can be said that if this commodity was at least of an average quality, it could be used for wood work, building work and for other similar work. Of all the paper-made articles, post card was one for which there should always be some demand among the common people. In fact, there were a number of small workshops which made post cards of different varieties and sizes. It is on record that Anandalal Biswas of Patpur, Motilal Bandyopadhyay, Amulyaratan Chowdhury and Namgopal Bandyopadhyay of Bankura and Dhanakrishna Roy of Beletore, made post cards which had some demand

in the local markets.⁵⁶ In the same period, *A. C. Dutta & Co.* of 22/1, Jhamapukur Lane, Calcutta specialised in note paper.⁵⁷ Another indigenous venture of the time was the *Tijarat Envelope Mfg. Co.* of Mymensingh town where card board boxes and envelopes of different colour and sizes were made.⁵⁸

The interesting feature about these Swadeshi firms is the diversification of their products. The entrepreneurs realised the needs of the market and made a variety of paper products, such as paper boards, envelopes, cardboard boxes, carbon paper, tracing paper, sand paper, post cards etc.

What was the market network of these commodities? How could these articles reach the hands of buyers from the rural and urban centres? It can be argued that the articles made in the rural centres met the demands of neighbouring villages and towns. One part of the rural products was sold either directly from the centres or from the groceries. The other part reached the towns through their agents and was sold through deshi shops. On the other hand, urban products were sold mostly in the towns and the suburban areas, while perhaps a small part was sent to the countryside. One such deshi shop was *Chattai Paper Depot*. It was located at Andarkilla in the town of Chittagong and owned by Pranhari Sen. This shop used to sell all kinds of Swadeshi paper.⁵⁹ Then Baidyanath Saha of 44/45, Monohardas Street, Calcutta, carried on his ancestral business of deshi paper of different types.⁶⁰

However, the most important venture in this line was the *City Paper & Straw Board Mills Ltd.*⁶¹ This mill owed its birth to the initiative of *Kuber Ltd.*, a business organisation started by a few Bengali entrepreneurs in 1920. It was at their initiative that the paper mill was set up in 1924. This was the first-ever mill making straw-boards along modern lines in India. A huge amount of capital was invested, the total amounting to nearly Rs. 9 lakhs. The mill was located in an area spread over 1 lakh sq. feet and had a total workforce of 300. Despite the fact that it was a Swadeshi venture, it had to seek the services of J. Morgans, who acted as the manager. It purchased a number of up-to-date machines, all of which were of foreign origin. These were:— 1. An engine of more than 400 H.P. capacity; 2. Three Fourdiner machines; 3. Twenty cylinder Driers; 4. Lancashire boiler; 5. Hollanders & Calenders, guillotine shears & cutters, etc; 6. One up-to-date machine shop. The rawmaterials used in the mill were primarily industrial refuse. The straw-board was used for making packing boxes, cartridge and howitzer shells as also for book-binding. The government patronised this concern by making purchases, and its products were adjudged to be superior to the imported varieties with which these competed in the market.

Attitude of the Government

It should be noted that the small workshops that emerged at the beginning of the 20th century owed their birth to the initiative of private individuals. Getting a few orders from the government was all that could be considered government patronage. Foreign 'experts' criticised deshi hand-made paper for its inferior quality. In 1882, an exhibition of Indian industrial products was held at London where paper was one of the exhibits. There the Bally Paper Mills sent their machine-made products, while hand-made paper of 32 varieties was sent from different small workshops. The two jury at the exhibition were W.H. Corswell and G.W. Strettell. In their report, they praised Bally paper and criticised hand-made paper for its inferior quality and higher price. They stated :—

“... The 'writings' are coarse in the extreme and wanting in colour and surface ; the quality is that to be found in native account books (roznamas and khatas) written with native ink. They bear proof of the 'stuff' having been over 'cooked' where old paper has been used, and undigested 'stuff' where gunnies and such like materials have been employed. “The system followed by native paper-makers to produce pulp and finally size the half 'stuff' defies the production of anything but the rudest materials, such as those before us. No progress seems to have been made in this art for the last quarter of a century . . . Indeed this industry appears rather to have retrograded than progressed”.⁶² Then they advised the government not to patronise this industry. “Did native hand-made paper commend itself even on account of cheapness, we might perhaps have felt disposed to suggest the grant of a certificate of honourable mention ; but when price and quality are alike against them, as compared with machine-made paper, we can see no good reason for fostering this form of industry or stimulating its growth”.⁶³

On the advice of these 'experts', the government made a declaration whereby use of mill-made paper was made compulsory at offices and courts and the purchase of deshi paper totally stopped. That was one of the reasons for the decline of deshi paper industry.⁶⁴ The attitude of the government remained the same for a long time to come. In December, 1914, Mr. Stefenson admitted at the meeting of the Bengal Council that the government had not yet taken up any project to encourage the development of indigenous paper industry.⁶⁵

Although the government was not interested in patronising hand-made paper industry, it started investigations into the natural properties of plants wherefrom paperpulp could be made. Accordingly, a plant was set up at the Forest Research Institute at Dehra Dun. It was to experiment by factory methods with plant materials of Indian forests and waste lands

which might have possibilities as sources of paper-making fibre stock. At the Paper Pulp Plant of the Institute, investigations were made on bamboos and grass; it was reported that the bamboo was digested fractionally with 15.5% of caustic soda and bleached with 5% standard bleaching powder on raw bamboo and the bleached yield was 39%.⁶⁶

With the same end in view, the government passed the *Bamboo Paper Industry (Protection) Act of 1925*, whereby protective duties were imposed on certain kinds of paper in order to develop the manufacture in India of paper from bamboo.⁶⁷ Although this was the declared objective, it failed to achieve its purpose. It was pointed out by A.K. Dasgupta in his evidence before the *Indian Tariff Board* that "at least 60% of the total Indian mill-made paper is manufactured not from bamboo, for which protection has been given, or even from *sabai* grass, but from imported pulp".⁶⁸ He argued that the Act of 1925 enabled the government to reap the largest benefit and complained that out of the large extra revenue the Government had collected by this protective measure, it could have easily put up an experimental bamboo pulp mill wherefrom Indian mills could procure the necessary rawmaterials. It thus appears that the Paper Pulp Institute at Dehra Dun did not benefit indigenous paper industry.

Despite the fact that there was a general decline of hand-made paper industry in Bengal, this industry did not totally disappear. In the mid-1930s, a number of *kagjis* of Areal in Dacca were engaged in producing coarse paper of different varieties. These were in great demand among the astrologers, horoscope-makers and local account book-keepers. There the essential rawmaterial was jute-fibre. Five/six reams of paper could be made from 1 maund of jute, and it took 8/10 days for 3 *kagjis* to make it. The market price of 1 ream ranged from Rs. 5 to Rs. 6 according to the quality of the paper.⁶⁹ At village Kagjipara under P.S. Patia, district Chittagong, paper for making kites and covers were made. It took 8 hours' labour time for 5/7 workers to make 100 tas of paper. Thin kite paper was sold at As. 4 per ta and yellow cover paper at As. 8 per ta.⁷⁰ Mainan village continued to carry on its old industry, 40 *kagjis* producing 6,000 quires of paper every year. There waste paper was the only raw-material, and no machines were used. The cost of production of 40 quires of paper was Rs. 7-8, and this was sold at a profit of Rs. 4-8.⁷¹

It was from the early 1940s that the government did something positive in this regard. It sanctioned a scheme for giving encouragement to the increased production of hand-made paper. The motive possibly was to give some relief to the artisans, who along with other sections of the common people had been hit hard by famines. It was a scheme for providing financial and technical help to them. It consisted of 4 parts :—

(1) Advances were to be given to the *kagjis* to enable them to buy improved equipment and appliances and the money was to be recovered from sale proceeds of paper produced.

(2) To supply essential chemicals at cost price.

(3) To give facilities for the disposal of finished products.

(4) To give free training to *kagjis* in improved methods of manufacture and standardisation.⁷²

Within a short period, work started in right earnest according to schedule. Besides Areal, production of hand-made paper increased in other centres of Dacca. The Bengal Government sanctioned a revolving credit with which 13 cottage factories started working, and more were expected to be set up. The *kagjis* of Areal got the necessary rawmaterials at bulk price and sold the products to the government at the market price so that some margin of profit was left for them. Along with this, the Government organised demonstration parties to train young workers in Faridpur and Munshiganj in setting up small factories for making paper. One of these parties gave training to about 12 members of the *Mahila Atmaraksha Samity* of Calcutta, and they started manufacturing paper on their own. Besides these, two government experts were sent to Katoa in Burdwan to help build up a workshop as a relief and rehabilitation measure.⁷³ Dr. A. Karim, the Director of Industries, had at his disposal a revolving credit of Rs. 10,000 for supplying rawmaterials to the *kagjis* at bulk price and for assisting them in selling their products. It is known from the government reports that in the financial year of 1944-45, rawmaterials amounting to Rs. 6,000 were given to the *kagjis* of Areal, and paper amounting to Rs. 12,000 was sold on the market. It is also on record that while before the introduction of this scheme, only 24 *kagjis* were engaged in paper-making, by 31 March 1945, the number increased to 176 and the monthly wage of each also doubled.⁷⁴

Conclusion

There is no doubt that paper-making centres in Bengal in the period before the setting up of foreign mills were based in the rural areas. These can be divided into some groups.

Firstly, there were pundits who could make paper on their own in their own homes for their own use, e.g., for making horoscopes etc. and which did not become commodity. The capital was his own, the tools were also owned by him, and the goods that he made had use-value, not exchange-value.

Secondly, there were some artisans in some areas who produced paper with an eye to the market. It was quite usual in those days to find in the house of a *kagji* earthen vats, dhenki (millstone), log, bamboo sieve, mats and a smooth stone. These were the means of production which some among them owned. Some of them had their own capital, however meagre the amount, and made paper for sale in the market. Here family labour, the labour of the handicraftsmen and their women and children, was employed. F. Buchanon, in his *An Account of the District of Shahabad* mentions 90 paper-making centres in Shahabad, which belonged to 60 houses. These establishments had a detailed division of labour, gave wages to the artisans, and sometimes each family as a whole with the employment of the labour of men, women and children, earned an annual income of Rs. 100. There were some centres at Shahabad which could be placed somewhere between a large family workshop and a primitive capitalist manufactory, whereas houses with more than one installation could be regarded as capitalist enterprise.⁷⁵ The products of these centres catered to the needs of businessmen as also the common people.

Thirdly, putting-out system was widely prevalent during this period. Merchant-middlemen (e.g. sowkars who generally used Indian hand-made paper for his account books as also pundits) advanced money to the *kagjis* and took away the finished products after keeping a margin of profit for them. In this case, like the previous one, the *kagjis* worked as individual units, owning the means of production, the essential difference being that, for the initial capital and marketing the products, they depended on merchants. The probability is that independent *kagjis* owning and selling their products were fewer than those under the control of merchant's capital. Though they owned their means of production, worked in their own homes and depended mainly on family labour, they were brought under its control by merchant's capital. What they actually had to do was to sell their labour power to the merchant buyers, and virtually become wage-earners working for them in their own homes. Such capitalist domestic paper industry existed in different parts of Bengal.

Fourthly, there is another category where we witness the concentration of a number of *kagjis* under the mastership of one person in one large workshop. Marx said: "Capitalist production only then really begins . . . when each individual capitalist employs simultaneously a comparatively large number of labourers; when consequently the labour process is carried on an extensive scale and yields relatively large quantities of products. A greater number of labourers working together, at the same time, in one place (or, if you will, in the same field of labour), in order to produce the same sort of commodity under the mastership of one capitalist, constitutes, both historically and logically, the starting

point of capitalist production".⁷⁶ In some areas of undivided Bengal, such capitalist manufacture definitely existed. It is evident from R. M. Martin's report that in the district of Patna in Bihar, there was division of labour (labourers for beating with the dhenki, a man to stir about the materials, others for pasting and smoothing the paper, making the paste, drying the sheets and also for cutting the paper). In those centres, about 140 workers were employed, and they made paper amounting to Rs. 32,000 every year. Martin refers to the paper-making centre at Arwal village in Patna where "the workmen must make very handsome wages".⁷⁷ D. N. Mukherjee, in his *Monograph* made it clear that there was a large workshop at Shahbazar village under Tarakeswar sub-division, district Hooghly, where 70 dhenkis were in operation. The owners of these manufacturing centres were probably zamindars.

There is no doubt that capitalist manufacture definitely made its appearance in the paper-making industry of Bengal. The transition from handicraft industry to manufacture had taken place, and both these forms could be found to co-exist with each other. It is not known to us whether this development from the first stage to the second was accompanied with the subsequent development of the tools of production. But what we do know is that the leap from manufacture to large-scale machine industry did not take place. After the establishment of colonial rule, indigenous capitalist manufacture was destroyed. The purchase of paper became a centralised item and the government bought all its requirements from England. Due to their failure to compete with foreign paper, the demand for hand-made paper diminished in the urban areas, in particular, and these centres did not have the resources to continue with their indigenous technical know-how.⁷⁸ In Bengal, indigenous capitalist paper manufacture was destroyed together with its know-how, and after some time, paper factory industry with its capital goods and technology, which were not the results of indigenous innovation, but which developed in the West, was transplanted here. In the early decades of the present century, a number of small Swadeshi firms sprang up which produced paper-made articles, thereby partly meeting the requirements of the local markets. On the other hand, large scale production of paper was also started in some deshi mills such as, the *City Paper & Straw Boards Mills Ltd.*, where imported machines were used and whose products successfully competed with foreign products in the domestic market. This was the condition of Swadeshi paper industry in colonial Bengal in the first three decades of the present century.

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2. *Monograph ... op. cit.*, p. 3.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5; *Dawn & Dawn Society's Magazine*, June 1909, New Series, pp. 105-07.
4. *Ibid.*
5. J.N. Gupta: *Monograph on Paper-making and Papier-mache in the province of Eastern Bengal and Assam*, General Deptt. (Misc. Br.) FN 6M/5, Prgs. B2 15-17, May 1909.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*, Section 2.
9. *Calcutta Gazette*, 1873, cited in *MM ... op. cit.*
10. *The Story of Handmade Paper Industry*, by Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Bombay, N. d. pp. 29-33.
11. V.I. Lenin: *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Moscow 1977, pp. 335-36.
12. S.K. Ghosh refers to industries such as ship-building, diamond-mining, iron and steel, silk filatures, silk and cloth printing, carpet-weaving, cotton textiles, shwal-making, sugar and dyestuff where capitalist manufacture appeared. See: *The Indian Big Bourgeoisie Its Genesis, Growth & Character*, Calcutta, 1985, pp. 69-71.
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18. *Ibid.*
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20. *Ibid ... Section 2.*
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23. 'Kagaj-o-kagajer karbar' ... *op. cit.*
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25. *Ibid.*, pp. 345-46; For the process of paper manufacture in Areal, see: *Banik*, Asad 1341, pp. 89-90.
26. *Krishak*, Pous 1311, p. 193; *Banik ... op. cit.*
27. *Ibid.*
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29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-23.
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32. *Ibid.*
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45. Mukerjee's *Monograph ... op. cit.*, p. 3.
46. Cumming ... *op. cit.*, pp. 33-34.
47. For a detailed study, see Amit Bhattacharyya's *Swadeshi Enterprise in Bengal 1900-1920*, Calcutta 1986.
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49. A. Bhattacharyya ... *op. cit.*, p. 275.
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51. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
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SIVNATH SHASTRI AND THE BENGALI INTELLIGENTSIA—A NOTE ON THE RISE OF NEW VALUES

Bhaskarjyoti Basu

Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan

The present day obsession with the dialectics in the relations among classes sometimes obscure the necessity of studying the shifts of power from one section to another within the same social group. In the larger context of a total transformation of society dreamt of by thinkers of the Marxist genre it might seem unimportant and even futile to probe into the inner workings of one particular social group. However, the alternative perspective developed by twentieth century sociologists like Gaetano Mosca¹ and Vilfredo Pareto,² trying to interpret changes in society in terms of competing interests within the same elite group, opened a new horizon in the study of the rise and replacement of one elite group by a 'counter-elite'.³ The following essay is an attempt to trace the advent of new values among the Bengali intelligentsia in the middle decades of the nineteenth century symbolised in one great event — the foundation of the *Sadharan Brahmo Samaj*. This was the work of Shibnath Shastri and a few of his associates like Ramtanu Lahiri, Rajnarain Basu, Anandamohan Bose, Durgamohan Das, Dwarkanath Ganguly, Manomohan Ghosh and a few others.⁴ These men derived their position from the fireness of their intellects and the strength of their moral fibre rather than their wealth and constituted a 'sub-elite'⁵ linking the wealthy upper class to the masses. The emergence of these new men to prominence indicated the passing out of the leadership of the society from the wealthy upper class (*abhijatas*) to the comparatively less affluent, but intellectually far more advanced, middle class (*Shikshita madhyabitta shreni*). Religious and intellectual non-conformism merely presaged political non-conformism and what had started with a revolt against the domination of the society by wealth, ultimately culminated in the triumph of democratic principles.

Judging by appearances, the development of schism in the Brahmo Church, and the breakaway from the *Bharatbarshiya Brahmo Samaj* formed a chapter in religious history. But ever since social history became conscious of the limitations of the "residual approach"⁶ historians ventured into fresher pastures to look for materials with which to bring alive the social existence of the past. An enquiry into the thinking involved in the first meeting of the *Sadharan Brahmo Samaj* also amounted to something more than the record of an incident in the history of the Brahmo

movement. It provided a key to the emotional life of these days — the great upheaval occurring in the minds of the people associated with the launching of this new assembly, the *Sadharan Brahmo Samaj*.

As is implicit in the name chosen by the secessionists, the *Sadharan Brahmo Samaj* or the assembly of commoners, was no longer to be swayed by the dictates of any single person, however high and mighty he might be. Instead, decisions were to be taken by the general mass of participants even if they could not boast of a proud ancestry. The values of the day were more concerned with the scrupulousness of a decision than with its expediency. Shibnath Shastri's reminiscences show that he could arrive at a decision only when he had become convinced of its soundness through a long and arduous process of mental struggle and quiet deliberation. Moral uprightness and cultural refinements, rather than wealth and showmanship, became the criteria which would elevate a person to a position of leadership in the *Samaj*. Shibnath Shastri and his associates embodied the spirit of these new values invading the heart of the nineteenth-century middle-class Bengali intelligentsia.

In his *Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalin Banga Samaj* Shibnath Shastri spoke about three successive phases of new Bengal.⁸ Among them were Reverend Krishnamohan Bandopadhyay, Ramgopal Ghosh, Rasik Krishna Mallik, Shib Chandra Dev, Hara Chandra Ghosh, Pyari Chand Mitra and Radhanath Sikdar of the early Hindu College days. Close upon their heels came Akshoy Kumar Datta, Rajendra Dutta, Harish Chandra Mukhopadhyay, Ishwar Chandra Gupta, Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Keshab Chandra Sen, Dinabandhu Mitra, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay, Dwarkanath Vidyabhusan, Dr. Mahendralal Saha and, above all, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw the emergence of people like Rajnarain Basu, Anandamohan Bose, Durgamohan Das, Dwarkanath Ganguly, Manomohan Ghosh and some others. They represented a new group among the intelligentsia which was being formed in Bengal in the second half of the nineteenth century. The expanding control of the colonial Government and the opening of new careers in public works like railways, municipalities, posts and telegraphs, or the newly opened institutions of Western learning like schools, colleges and universities and in the proliferating number of European mercantile establishments attracted the traditional gentry (*grihasthas*) or literate rent-receiving castes from all over the province in search of employment.⁹

Shibnath himself was one such immigrant to the city from the suburban family of Majilpur near Jaynagar in the 24-Parganas. This orthodox, Vaidik Brahmin family had been traditionally engaged in the pursuit of Sanskrit learning in *tols* and no one in the family had accepted service

under the government before his father Harananda Bhattacharya. Harananda could not get more than twenty-five rupees a month by teaching Sanskrit in a *pathsala* or lower-level school in Burdwan district. He thus became totally disillusioned with Sanskrit learning and wanted to take Shibnath to Calcutta to learn English at Hare School. But later he thought it would be better for Shibnath to study at Sanskrit College, where his maternal uncle, Dwarkanath Vidyabhushan was a teacher since Vidyasagar had introduced English in the curricula of the Sanskrit College.¹⁰

Although these men flocked to the city to master the new mode of learning offered by the colonial government and expected to make a career in its pay, they were never quite cut off from their rural roots. Most of them kept their families in the villages and made regular trips to these areas whenever opportunities were available. Their rural origins thus continued to exert a strong influence on their psyche in spite of their dwellings in an urban atmosphere. They sought western learning for reasons of expediency. But in their value system they remained loyal to the traditional mores of the country. They thus offered a marked contrast to the Young Bengal group of the earlier part of the century.

The unorthodox behaviour of the Young Bengal group often hurt their susceptibilities and made them critical of their newly acquired values.¹² The Young Bengal had a wealthy and prosperous background. Most of them were sons of *zamindars*, merchants or lawyers. Shibnath Shastri did not have a very high opinion of the moral sense of these affluent groups and the means employed by them for attaining to such affluence. In his *Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalin Bangasamaj* he noted with horror how contemporary society felt no repulsion at acquiring wealth through falsehood, deception, bribing, forgery or fraud (*mithya, prabanchana, utkoch, jal, juachuri*). Those who attained success by these means might even be widely acclaimed for their tact and intelligence. This ill-gotten wealth would subsequently find its way in ostentatious spending in marriages, funerals or festivals. The excesses of prosperous householders with dancing girls and countesans was another facet of this decadence.¹³

The decline in the moral standards at the upper levels of the society merely reflected a wider social degeneration. The nineteenth century was a period of transition in Bengal. The advent of the English as political masters had ushered in a whole range of novel values and practices. There were many vicissitudes in the economic fortunes of the people of this province. Many old independent merchant houses had to close down and go out of business for their inability to compete with the proteges of the East India Company.¹⁴ On the other hand, a flourishing network of private trade by the so-called *baniyans* of the big shots of the East India

Company was coming up.¹⁵ The Permanent Settlement offered these people a strong mooring in the countryside from where to derive a steady supply of the funds which kept up the pomp and splendour of their mansions in Calcutta.¹⁶ As the number of *patnidars* and *dar-patnidars* kept on spiralling beneath a *zamindar*,¹⁷ the fruits of the cultivators' toil in the fertile tracts of Bengal began to line the pockets of a rising class of *nouveaux riches* possessing stately mansions and horse-drawn coaches. They were new entrants in the highest ranks of the society.¹⁸ Having come up in the train of their foreign masters or patrons, these people tried to imbibe some of their cultural practices. While a deep appreciation of the finer aspects of Western culture often eluded the common people, they indulged instead in an obnoxious aping of their alien preceptors in certain superficial aspects of their lives. The impact of these hybrid influences was not very beneficial for the society at large. In his *Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalin Bangasamaj* Shibnath Shastri 'spoke with great repugnance of these people who had lost sight of the ancient moral and cultural values of their society, but were yet to receive the benedictions of a new culture in its proper perspective: 'Affluent, middle-class households in the city at this time displayed a group of people called 'baboo'. The influence of Persian and a little English destroyed their faith in the traditional religion and led them to spend all their time in worldly enjoyment. They spent their days sleeping, flying kites, watching mock fights between birds (*bulbul*) playing various instruments like the *sitar*, lyre and the harp, listening to recitals of *kavi*, *half akhrai* and *panchali* (variations of local and folk songs) while their nights were mostly occupied in revelries in the brothels. Fairs at Khardaha and the Rath festival at Mahesh found them floating in boats crowded with large numbers of prostitutes from Calcutta on pleasure trips'.¹⁹

The malaise did not merely remain confined to the upper levels of society or the city dwellers. It also affected new comers who had flocked to the city to find jobs and had regular links with their native villages. The cancer had spread even to people belonging to the immediate circle in which Shibnath had to move. In his *Atmacharita*, Shibnath Shastri provided a first-hand account of how his maternal uncle's absence during the night of Saturday and the whole of Sunday provided the inmates of his mess with an opportunity to indulge into various forbidden pleasures like drinking, smoking *ganja* (hemp) or something even worse.²⁰

The moral confusion of the day had reached such frightful proportions that drinking had been elevated in popular imagination to a symbol of emancipation. Shibnath Shastri bore witness how drinking was considered to be a distinct way of defying superstitions and conventions. He depreciated the way most of the radicals of the Young Bengal group had

succumbed to this pernicious trend. He thought that these misguided youth had become so dazzled by their sudden confrontation with Western culture that they found it difficult to adapt their traditional values to the novel ways of the West which had just been opened up before them. Inexperience and want of a strong self-confidence made them incapable of discriminating between what was good and what was not in the West. Under the spell of Derozio, the renowned young teacher at Hindu College, they fell hook, line and sinker for everything that was associated with the West. Shibnath found it alarming that Hindu College boys of even sixteen or seventeen found it a matter of pride to drink.²¹ He found nothing admirable in the intellectual enslavement which accepted everything European to be unquestioningly superior to everything Indian and thought that only a single shelf of English books can surpass the knowledge contained in the literature of the whole of India or Arabia.²²

Shibnath Shastri discovered a silver lining behind Derozio's atheism and faith in the radical principles propagated by Tom Paine. For some time it led his students to be sceptical of all religions alike. Hinduism was thus spared some exodus to Christianity. However, Christianity soon recovered its lost ground with Derozio's dismissal from the Hindu College and his premature death²³ and a number of Hindu College boys like Krishnamohan Banerjee, Gopikanta Nandi and Mahesh Chandra Ghosh turned to its fold. Even those who did not formally seek conversion were also deeply influenced by Christian ideals. This admiration for Christianity also affected two Brahma leaders as well — Rammohun Roy²⁴ and Keshub Chandra Sen.²⁵

This emphasis on Christianity in particular and Eurocentric ideals in general changed markedly in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Young Bengal of later days themselves were then established and respected people of mature age who probably felt a bit uneasy and embarrassed about their radical past.²⁶ The new age was characterised to some extent by a revivalist trend of which people like Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay were the spokesman.²⁷ The emphasis was no more on western life style and ideals, but a well-proportioned mixture of Indian and European values. The intense debate of the Hindu College days about the judiciousness of Macaulay's policy of introducing Western education in India in the face of opposition from Orientalists²⁸ had by then died down. It had been widely accepted that the future no longer lay with the traditional type of learning and Western education was the order of the day. But this appreciation of the expediency of taking to western education for being able to compete better in the job market under an alien government was very different from the blind imitation of Western culture in all its aspects regardless of its compatibility with the social norms of the

country. The defeat of traditional learning was slow, but sure, to come. But unlike the Young Bengals, the new generation of students were very clear in their aims and objectives. They went for English education, but did not share the iconoclastic frenzy of the Young Bengal days.

Shibnath Shastri typified in his own person the emergence of this new trend among the nineteenth-century middle-class intelligentsia. They still wanted to reform the evils of Indian social life like child marriage, the backwardness of females, idolatry and many such superstitious practices. But a reaction developed against an obsession with European culture and the aping of English manners which went with it. In his *Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalin Bangasamaj* Shibnath carried on a tirade against the Bengali babu of wealth who was notoriously engaged in drinking liquor and the pursuit of other sensual pleasures. Shibnath with his emphasis on religiosity and moral values marked quite a contrast to them and one can legitimately assume that he was not alone in this respect. There were many who shared his ideas and set examples to others by their dignified behaviour. These were the men who became the standard-bearer of Brahmo reformism in the 1870s.

For Shibnath and his associates, "practical religion" was always more important than a dry discussion on theology. They wanted to improve their own selves by the smothering of bad habits and practices and the emulation of pious men. Shibnath had gone through Theodore Parker's works extensively, Newman's 'Soul' inspired him and Arthur Help's *Essays written in the Intervals of Business and Friends in Council* exerted a deep influence on him. In the initial phase of his religious life, he derived most of his spiritual sustenance from Theodore Parker's *Ten Sermons and Prayers*. From Parker he derived his ardent faith in the efficacy of prayer and whenever he was in a dilemma in his later life, he always fell back on prayers to God to get him out of the crisis. In a passage of his *Atmācharita* there is a vivid account of one such moral dilemma which he could overcome only through prayer —

Prayers gave me strength as well as hopes. My heart started saying that God will not leave me because I was a sinner. Probably Parker's soft and hopeful devotion had helped me a lot in this matter. Whatever it might have been, it was quite clear to me that earnest prayer never went futile. My heart was exulting with joy from divine inspiration. Since then I always had great faith in prayers. I had many temptations afterwards, sometimes I surrendered to them, everything went dark, but the faith in prayers never left me. In all struggles, I found strength in weaknesses, hopes in despair, and joys in sorrow. It was as if I could see with an inner eye that Almighty

God was catching hold of His feeble son with the firm grasp of parents holding a toddler. The simple and weak individual was incapable of walking without help ; he was falling each time he forgot Him. And again and again He was holding him up out of the dust and wiping off his tears.

Throughout his *Atmcharita*, Shibnath was conscious of this struggle between his aspirations for spiritual elevation and the human failures and natural senses. However, he was more concerned with the practical aspects of religion than with its theological subtleties. Herein lay his distinctiveness from the ordinary mass of people. This keen moral judgement found expression in a kind of hesitation which at times amounted to indecision. The reason is clear. Shibnath had to judge every aspect of an affair very scrupulously, consider every possibility and then take the decision.⁸⁰

This trait of Shibnath's character must have been very personal. It could not have been a general phenomenon among his contemporaries. But this scrupulousness and inclination towards quiet deliberation is noteworthy, as Brahma Samaj itself was famous for its emphasis, at times too much of it, on sound judgement and good taste. In contrast to the earlier period of amorality, qualities like honesty and integrity found, at least partially, a place in the social life of Bengal.

The circumstances leading to the launching of the *Sadharan Brahma Samaj* and the leading role assumed by Shibnath Shastri and some like-minded people independent of the *Adi Samaj* of Debendranath Tagore and the *Bharatbarshiya Brahma Samaj* of Keshab Chandra Sen were symptomatic of the changes coming over the emotional life of the new age. Debendranath refused to dismiss his belief in existing social practices like the caste system and was a believer in the superiority of the Brahmins. Keshab Chandra Sen broke away from Debendranath and formed *Bharatbarshiya Brahma Samaj*. At first Keshab had pronounced Christian leanings, but later when he came into contact with Ramkrishna Paramhansa Dev, his long subdued Vaisnava heritage emerged, and he turned to mysticism. But a number of young Brahmos objected to the authoritarian manner in which Keshab Chandra was conducting the affairs of *Bharatbarshiya Brahma Samaj*. In his *Atmcharita* Shibnath Shastri describes how Keshab Sen tried to pass all his own decisions as divine dispensations.⁸¹

This ultimately led to a fear among Keshab Sen's associates that they would lose the freedom of thinking. Bipin Chandra Pal noted that the young Brahmos revolted on three points ; first, they demanded that individual reason must be supreme in determining what is true in religious

matters ; secondly, it was desired that individual conscience should be left free to determine what was right and what was wrong not only in personal but also in domestic and social relations, and thirdly, they argued that the majority in the Brahmo Samaj should have a say in the conduct of affairs in the Samaj. All this meant that the fundamental principle of democracy in the conduct of the Church was asserted. The Cooch Behar marriage in 1878,⁸³ which was widely denounced by the Young Brahmos as an evidence of Keshab Chandra's lack of sincerity and principle, brought the final break. Meetings of Brahmos were held and mass protests were sent to Keshab Chandra who refused to admit his fault. Many Brahmos broke away from Keshab Chandra Sen and the *Sadharan Brahmo Samaj* was formed.

Shibnath wrote at length how the name '*Sadharan*' was chosen. When Shibnath and others formed the new *Samaj*, they were certain of one thing. In *Bharatbarshiya Brahmo Samaj*, Keshab Chandra had rules like a dictator. In the new Samaj, that would not be allowed and the principles of a *Sadharantantra* or republic would be followed. Every member of the new assembly would have his share in the task of decision-making. A battle for the freedom of individual conscience and democratic rights ensured. Shibnath noted that many of the Brahmos of advanced age did not like the new name. They found the name '*Sadharan*' too trivial and thought that it lacked weight and dignity.⁸⁴ Some others thought that the *Samaj* was the property of the general mass and anything could be done there. But as Shibnath noted, the most important result was that the members thought it their constant duty to fight against the domination of a single person.

Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, occupied, without doubt, a very important place in the socio-cultural life of Bengal for decades in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Its most important contribution was, however, in giving rise to an aspiration for freedom and democratic right, the growth of non-conformism which went a long way towards the growth of the nationalist movement. It may not be out of place to mention in this context that though Shibnath's primary qualification was not as a political leader, he took an active part in 1876 in the formation of *Bharat Sabha* along with Surendranath Banerjee and Ananda Mohan Bose. Soon afterwards, they took a vow to leave government service and without bothering about the advice of well-wishers and friends, Shibnath Shastri resigned from the educational service. Later, he worked for the foundation of the City School.

The foregoing essay vividly brings into focus, one very remarkable development in Bengali society in the second half of the nineteenth century. This was the passing out of the leadership of the society, from

the wealthy upper class or the 'dominant elite' to the sub-elite of comparatively less affluent but intellectually far more advanced middle class. This newly emerging class insisted on a distinct cultural entity of their own. It is significant that they no longer looked to the West or to Christianity for moral inspiration as earlier stalwarts like Rammohan or Keshab Chandra had done. Traditional Hinduism reinvigorated by Ramkrishna Paramhansa's mystical preachings had more appeal for them instead. This moral break from the West was also clearing the path for a political break as evinced in the dawn of a very faint political consciousness among this rising middle class intelligentsia.

1. Gaetano Mosca, *The Ruling Class* (New York, 1939).
2. Vilfredo Pareto, *The Mind and Society* 4 Vols (London, 1935).
3. T.B. Bottomore, *Elites and Society* (Penguin, 1985).
4. Shibnath Shastri, *Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalin Bangasamaj*, p. 55. (Calcutta, 1903. In this essay the 1957 edition has been used).
5. *Op. Cit.*, T.B. Bottomore, p. 11.
6. E.J. Hobsbawm, *From Social History to the History of Society* (Dadealus, V. 100, Winter 1971).
7. Shibnath Shastri, *Atmucharita*, p. 70.
8. Shibnath Shastri, *Ramtanu Lahiri O Tatkalin Bangasamaj*.
9. Rajat Kanta Ray, *Social Conflict and Political Unrest in Bengal 1875-1927*, p. 32.
10. It is remarkable that David Koff missed this point and mistakenly mentioned that Shibnath in his early days studied in Hare School while in fact he studied at Sanskrit College. David Koff *The Brahmo Samaj and the Shaping of the Modern Indian Mind* (Princeton, 1979) p. 92, *Op. Cit.* Shibnath Shastri *Atmucharita*, p. 42.
11. Pradip Sinha, *Nineteenth Century Bengal, Aspects of Social History*, (Calcutta, 1965).
12. 'Deorzio and Young Bengal' in Susobhan Sarkar, *On the Bengal Renaissance* (Papyrus, 1979), p. 103.
13. *Op. Cit.* Shibnath Shastri, *Ramtanu Lahiri* ... p. 55.
14. *Op. Cit.* R.K. Ray, *Social Conflict* ... p. 17.
15. Rev. James Long, 'Calcutta in the Olden Time; Its Localities and Its People' in *Calcutta Review*, Vol. XXXV, September, 1860.
16. B.M. Bhatia, 'The Elite Approach to the Study of Modern Indian History' in B.R. Nanda and V.C. Joshi (ed.), *Studies in Modern Indian History* (Orient Longman, 1972), pp. 48-49; Pradip Sinha, *Calcutta in Urban History* (Calcutta, 1978), p. 16.
17. Between the proprietor and the actual cultivator there might be 8 to 20 grades of intermediate tenure holders. T. Raychaudhuri, 'Permanent Settlement in Operation: Bakarganj District, East Bengal' in Eric Frykenberg, *Land Control and Social Structure in Indian History* (Wisconsin, 1969), p. 167.
18. S.N. Mukherjee, *Class, Caste and Politics in Calcutta, 1815-38* in E.R. Leach and S.N. Mukherjee (ed.) *Elites in South Asia* (Cambridge, 1970).
19. *Op. Cit.* Shibnath Shastri, *Ramtanu Lahiri*, p. 56, translation mine.
20. *Op. Cit.* Shibnath Shastri, *Atmucharita*, p. 51.
21. *Op. Cit.* Shibnath Shastri, *Ramtanu Lahiri O* p. 157.
22. *Ibid.* p. 142.
23. Sumit Sarkar, 'The Complexities of Young Bengal (*Nineteenth Century Studies*, Calcutta, October 1973 pp. 513-14).
24. Sumit Sarkar, 'Rammohan Ray and the Break with the Past' in V.C. Joshi (ed.) *Rammohan Roy and the process of Modernisation in India* (Delhi, 1975).

25. *Op. Cit.* Devid Kopf, *The Brahma Samaj*
26. *Op. Cit.* Sumit Sarkar, 'The Complexities of Young Bengal'.
27. Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial Worlds* (O U.P, 1986).
28. David Kopf, *British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance: The Dynamics of Indian Modernisation 1773-1835* (Calcutta, 1969).
29. Shibnath Shastri, *Atmcharita*, p. 70, translation mine.
30. *Ibid.* p. 92.
31. *Ibid.* p. 115.
32. Bipin Chandra Pal, *The Brahma Samaj and the Battle for Swaraj*, pp. 26-31.
33. Shibnath Shastri, *Atmcharita*, p. 148. While denouncing child marriage on principle, Keshab Chandra had arranged the marriage of his minor daughter in the Coochbehar Raj family. This hurt the sensibilities of the young Brahmos.
34. *Ibid.* p. 153.

Calcutta Tercentenary Lectures

The Inaugural Seminar : A Report

On 5 December 1987 the Calcutta Historical Society inaugurated a series of Calcutta Tercentenary lectures by arranging a seminar at the lecture hall of the National Library. The Minister for Finance, Government of West Bengal, Dr Asim Dasgupta, inaugurated the seminar. The Minister informed the audience that the problems of Calcutta were great, perhaps greater than those of any other metropolitan city of India. These problems, he declared, could be resolved only by decentralising the city and by building up satellite townships around or outside the bigger metropolitan periphery of the city. But that too will be inadequate unless strong efforts were made to keep the growth of population under control.

The main session of the seminar was divided into three parts. The first part of the session was presided over by Mr Nisith Ranjan Ray. The main speaker of this session was Mr Purnendu Pattrea, whose paper was centred on one question : Can Job Charnock be considered the founder of Calcutta? Was it not a myth that Calcutta owed its origin to the English? What we know to be the history of the origin of Calcutta, he said, is a tale told by the English. How far, he asked, can we repose our trust on hypothesis framed by the English on the basis of their own records. The prospects of Calcutta growing into a large township were first discovered by the Seths and Basaks who were the real settlers in the villages of Sutanati, Govindapur and Kalikata. They migrated from Saptagram and eventually found their habitation in the south-eastern side of the Ganga. Mr Pattrea said with emphasis that it was they who made Calcutta the emporium of cotton yarn. It was their finance which kept the production of cotton-piece going here. It was their magnetism which invited the regional trade to find its diversion here. In course of his paper Mr Pattrea furnished a list of families who permanently settled in Calcutta between 1537 and 1690. According to his computation the Basaks of Govindapur alone settled two thousand and five hundred weavers in Calcutta. Many others might have followed their example. This is how Calcutta originated.

The second part of the session shifted the discussion from the problem of the origin of Calcutta to the problem of the Calcutta landlords during the early colonial period : In the chair was Professor Nilmani Mukherjee. The speaker in this session was Dr Ranjit Sen. The Calcutta landlords, Dr Sen said, grew within the context of a bigger transformation that was taking place within Mughal landlordism in Bengal in the eighteenth

century. The Mughal rule under Murshid Quli Khan had discarded the old territorial aristocracy of Bengal as a host of negligent and indolent people who would be of no help to the Mughals in their efforts towards consolidation. Thus infinite new zamindaris grew vis-a-vis the declining old ones. There was a conflict between these two sets of landlords. This conflict was repeating itself in Calcutta when the English East India Company began to quarrel with the Savarna Chaudhuris of Barisha over land. The little amount of territory which the English succeeded in wresting from the local zamindars through purchase and other means were in no time converted into an estate by the English where they could grow their own kind of sovereignty under the paramountcy of the Mughals. With this de facto sovereignty at hand the English in Calcutta successfully developed the concept of the inviolability of property. The result was that rich merchants and inferior Rajas began to accumulate wealth in Calcutta. Thus within a short time a class of rich people grew in Calcutta whom N. K. Sinha and others considered to be a capitalist class, wealthy but ineffectual because of the lack of avenues where they could invest their treasure. During the rule of Hastings these men were sent into the interior to discover the hidden riches there and, if possible, to take over the zamindaris which otherwise had developed in antagonistic relation with the Company's government. The Calcutta landlords spread out to the districts around Calcutta but there they were baffled by the hostilities of the revenue-managing agencies of the Mughals. From their revenue bunglings these men of opulence turned to other methods of revenue-making and here they acted with a quick-profit motivation. They purchased in Calcutta, and in the immediate vicinity of the city, extensive real estates, land and buildings and settled bazars in these lands. Their immediate profit was the rent and taxes that came from the bazars and the human habitations which settled here and there with unplanned orientations. As these habitations grew up they carried on from the village and carefully maintained in their heart the internal spirit of the village. Thus urbanisation in Calcutta followed the traditional line of rusticity available in the complex of *tola*, *tulis*, *para*, *bazars* etc. Here one will find the tragedy of history imperceptibly writ large.

The third session of the seminar was on the early business community of Calcutta. The principal talk was given by Dr Chittabrata Palit. One of the persisting myths, Dr Palit argued, which has acquired emotional value is that the Bengalis had no business acumen. From the available data the picture that emerges is different. The logic which is put forward to sustain this myth is a triad: that the Bengalis have no tradition of business enterprise, that they invest all wealth in land, and that they have developed a banian character in their way of life. Beyond the precincts of the English records the historian must cast his eyes and discover what

BOOK REVIEWS

Letters of Sister Nivedita, 2 Vols. Vol. 1, 1898-1902, Vol. 2 1903-1911, Collected and edited by Sankari Prasad Basu. Assisted by Bimal Kumar Ghosh. Nababharat Publishers, Calcutta, 1982. Rs. 160.00 Pp. [48]+1287. Illustrations in Vol. 1 : Nns. 20 ; in Vol. 2 : Nos. 24. Sketches in Vol. 1 : Nos. 5 ; in Vol. 2 : Nos. 24.

The rediscovery of Sister Nivedita has been both gradual and dramatic. The dramatic element has been supplied by the find of her letters like those in the collection of Lizelle Raymond and a further hoard found in the possession of Frances Leggett. The mass of materials thus recovered has been collected and edited by Sankari Prasad Basu in two volumes which must be regarded as companions to the complete works of Sister Nivedita published on the occasion of her birth centenary in 1967.

Although Sister Nivedita, unlike other great letter-writers, did not think that good letters were worth writing for their own sake, the very sincerity of her letters renders them extremely valuable. They reveal character which had such a creative effect on the world. These letters, one must remember, were never meant to be published, but Nivedita bears the public scrutiny of her private communications without loss of dignity and deserves the unsought fame they may bring her long after her death.

Sister Nivedita is one of the most puzzling, as well as one of the best loved, of the remarkable personalities who gave direction to renaissance India in the first decade of this century. Daughter of an Irish nationalist, Margaret E. Noble, after a romantic tragedy, broke the home ties and escaped into a life of active social service and came to India in 1898 as a disciple of Swami Vivekananda. The woman who lived the interior life of the soul was also the amazing energumen of revolutionary anarchism in Bengal. Her meteoric orbit regularly touched and intersected the circle of revolutionaries.

Her letters naturally project the personality very effectively. The vitality of the writing, the understanding and the sympathy make the collection memorable. These letters of unequalled richness and variety give the Indian mind an image of itself. Indian nationalists in that age had few thoughts, aspirations, or fantasies which Nivedita had not shared or expressed. She worked wonders by her calm powers of organization and discipline. Her message to her spiritual sons and daughters was primarily of strength and courage.

Nivedita's letters, of which about eight hundred have been collected in the volumes under review, were written for the most part between 1898 and 1911. For whom was she writing? First, no doubt for her corres-

pondents like Ole Bull, Mrs. J. MacLeod, S.K. Ratcliffe, editor of the *Statesman*, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindra Nath Tagore, G.K. Gokhale, J.C. Bose, Ramendra Sundar Trivedi and Dines Chandra Sen. Through some of these correspondents Nivedita seems to have written for a circle of mutual friends round which her letters would be passed as would a newsletter of an institution. Occasionally one detects a note of self-consciousness. But usually she appears completely spontaneous, writing for circulation only among a small, appreciative group. Also, she writes for herself to clarify her own ideas and thoughts. She is by no means a dilettante.

As a letter-writer, Nivedita stamps contemporary history with her own outlook. This was the outlook of a foreigner who tried to identify herself completely with the Hindu tradition and deeply sympathized with Indians in their aspirations and hopes. Her letters are marked by a deep love of beauty, religion and Indian patriotic sentiment. In fact, these symbolized the heroic service of this women who wanted to rejuvenate our society. Within less than two years after her arrival in this country she had acquired a proficiency in our culture and tradition which would have taken others at least ten years. Without any diminution of industry or abatement of mental energy she served the country of her adoption until she died.

Nivedita's topics in these letters concern politics, education, social reform, art, religion, women's movement as well as day-to-day happenings in her circle in Calcutta and elsewhere: all this interlaced with social gossip and tittle-tattle about exalted persons representing the Raj. We learn from her about the scandalous behaviour of Sir E.N. Bakar at a state ball. She refers to Sir Lancelot Hare as a drunkard who lived away from his wife. By special request of Girish Chandra Ghose Nivedita one day entertained "two ladies of un-virtue" who found the austere furnished bed rooms of her Girls' School to be far inferior to what they themselves were used to.

Some letters included in these volumes reveal the political wisdom and insight of the person who wrote them. Nivedita was inclined to think that Lord Curzon would stand in history as the most anti-British influence that India had ever seen. She described the British empire as rotten to the core — corrupt in every direction, and tyrannical and mean, but she thought that the English language might have a mission in unifying India politically and culturally. On second thoughts, she had no doubt that John Morley, in spite of his liberalism, would prove to be a reactionary in matters Indian. How right she was!

Again, we learn from her that all had been arranged for the deportation of Chittaranjan Das. Nivedita received a warning from her friends that the police had been authorized to intercept her mail, and for this she had to take precaution. She was even suspected of having master-minded

some of the Swadeshi decoities! She realized that in the existing circumstances honest and open action would not serve any purpose. Consequently she was obliged to resort to stratagem and slightly devious means, which originally she had determined to avoid, to get things done. This explains why she had sometimes to travel incognito.

Besides this running commentary on public events, there is in these letters Nivedita herself: her emotions, her readings, her reflections, her journeys, her quiet life at Bagh Bazar, her small parties where she occasionally brought together and entertained persons like Swami Vivekananda and Rabindra Nath Tagore. Special interest attaches to a group of letters which tell us about such gatherings. In letter No. 17 dated January 30, 1899 she describes such a party: "It was quite a brilliant little gathering, for Mr. Tagore sang 3 of his own compositions in a lovely tenor — and Swami was lovely". Some letters provide intimate snapshots of the poet: "The Poet: Mr. Tagore, was a perfect guest. He has a naif sort of vanity in speech which is so child like as to be rather touching. But he thinks of others all the time — as no one but a Western hostess could". Nivedita whimsically made an ink-impression of her right palm after the manner of the Cabuliwallah in the Tagore short story of that name which she had translated into English.

The hints at Swami Vivekananda's reservations about the Tagores are worth further exploration. Although Nivedita was fond of Sarala Devi, she felt that "this worship of her own family is very irritating". The proposal that the Ramakrishna order should drop Ramakrishna-worship to bring about an alliance between the order and the Brahmos represented by the Tagores was too much for Nivedita. "After all, who are these Tagores?" — she wrote in utter exasperation.

Although one finds only four letters written to Swami Vivekananda in the first volume, he was doubtless the paramount influence on Nivedita's life. He was constantly in her thoughts after his death, yet, curiously, Nivedita seems to have felt free to act as she pleased in that phase of her life when the letters in the second volume were written. Did overmuch attention to other people's advice sometimes hobble her personal genius?

Sankari Prasad Basu, as editor of the present volumes of letters, has apologised for his inability to provide a general introduction with a historical background. He deserves sympathy for the difficulties he has faced in collating and editing the letters. Nivedita's handwriting is not easily decipherable, and her highly allusive writing is often rendered more difficult by her deliberate adoption of a kind of shorthand to throw the Intelligence Branch men off the scent. Moreover, some letters have a personal cogency now difficult to discern. It is hoped that it will be possible for the editor to bring out in future an edition worthy of the letters. Such an edition, to be of full use to scholars, should be better printed, be free from printing errors abounding in the present volumes, contain detailed expla-

natory notes on at least the more important letters, biographical notes on the recipients of the letters and the persons mentioned therein and an exhaustive index.

Many have been enthralled by the portraits of Swami Vivekananda and Sister Nivedita which Sankari Prasad Basu has drawn with extraordinary, unobtrusive skill in his magisterial multi-volume life of Swami Vivekananda and a three-volume life of Sister Nivedita. These monumental and absorbing studies with their immense and unfaltering mastery of detail are truly remarkable achievements. Sankari Prasad Basu is the fittest person to prepare a definitive edition of Nivedita's letters. True, the letters only add details to the already life-size portrait of Nivedita that exists in her collected works and biographies, but, nevertheless, the portrait is incomplete without those touches provided by the letters.

The present edition deficient though it is in some respects, brings one of the greatest figures in our history back from formal record to life. In sheer quantity and variety these letters constitute a treasure trove. They give the writer a high place among the distinguished commentators on men and events of a significant period of India's history. These letters, natural, kindly and witty, in every bit of which the writer's fundamental sincerity shows through, have an unusual interest for the student of India's freedom struggle in all its aspects. Added value is given to the volumes by reproduction of a number of rare photographs and other illustrations, facsimile copies of some of Nivedita's important letters and sketches which are of extraordinary interest. If any scholar ignores these volumes, he will do so at his own risk. This daughter of Ireland belongs almost as much as Swami Vivekananda himself to the history of modern India.

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History of Cossimbazar Raj in the Nineteenth Century/Period covered : 1804-1897. Volume—I.

by Somendra Chandra Nandy. Foreword by Peter J. Marshall. Preface by Anil Chandra Banerjee. Pp. XXIV + 597 with Appendices. Plates and Illustrations. Dev-All Private Ltd., Calcutta. 1986 Rs. 300.00; £ 20.00, \$ 30.00.

With this third volume of his monumental study of the history of the house of Cossimbazar founded by Cantoo Baboo, Somendra Chandra Nandy's labours have assumed a form that should satisfy readers and author alike. The present volume, which deals with the biographies of Rajas Harinath (1802-1832), and Krishnanath (1822-1844) and Maharani

Swaranamayi (1827-1897), is a very large and detailed work, but that, too, is a reflection of the complex problems of estate management during nearly one hundred years under changing conditions in a colonial environment.

The book under review is well fortified. Two very eminent historians, one of whom has contributed a foreword to this book and the other a preface, have covered the ground so thoroughly that the present reviewer is at a loss to say anything that is new or original.

After the abolition of the zamindari system in West Bengal and East Pakistan a few former zamindars published book-length studies of their family histories. Two such books deserve special mention. They are *Changing Times* (1965) by the late Maharaja Bhupendra Chandra Sinha of Susang and *Ami* (Vol. 1, 1979 and Vol. 2, 1983) by Jibendra Kishore Acharya Chaudhuri of Muktagachha. These, however, are written mostly from memory. Somendra Chandra Nandy's plan is much more ambitious. Any serious student of the history of Bengal under British rule must read his enormous books, since they are built on a solid foundation of unpublished family and estate papers to which he alone has access. The volume under review also contains a wealth of fresh materials in which any historian of the period will find great pleasure.

The book opens with a biographical study of Raja Harinath Ray who emerges as a more or less competent manager of the estate he inherited. He increased his income by buying new properties and by commercial ventures. He took advantage of the disintegration of the older zamindaris under the rigours of the Permanent Settlement. It was known that the value of the zamindari lands appreciated after 1825. Somendra Chandra's case study charts this process by quantified data. Raja Harinath was more than a mere man of property. His patronage of Sanskrit studies and of the *Kabiwallahs* as well as of English education in the early 1830s was of much significance.

Raja Krishnanath was in every way a great contrast to his father. This unstable young man who ended his tempestuous life by committing suicide was a typical product of the uncertain times in which he lived. Caught in the cultural cross-fire, he did not know where he actually stood. But his life was not merely a rake's progress, for this wild young man took some steps for the construction of a ship-building yard at Saidabad with a view to establishing a direct river and sea link between Cossimbazar and London. The person who intended to establish a university complete with a medical college and hospital near Cossimbazar in the early 1840s cannot be dismissed simply as a mountebank. It may be that others put ideas into his head, but he must be given credit for having absorbed these ideas in his own way. The university project, however, was never executed because of his sudden death and the subsequent invalidation of his will by the Supreme Court. One wonders what would have happened if this maverick lived to put some of his romantic ideas into practice. It is understandable

why the author, who has inherited what is left of the Cossimbazar estate, expresses a sense of relief for the fact that Krishnanath did not live long to indulge his squandermania.

The fatal gun shot of October 31, 1844 brought an illiterate widow of seventeen to the ownership of the Cossimbazar estate, although she had to fight hard to establish her rights. A person of weaker fibre would have broken down under the strain. In describing how this girl, ultimately bereft of her own children, was not only able to assert herself in a very hostile environment, but shaped well as an administrator of a vast zamindari with all its intricacies, became a patroness of every good cause, educating herself in the process and ending in the fulness of years as 'the gracious Maharani', Somendra Chandra is especially good. Those historians who are currently interested in women's studies would do well to refer to the career of this *purdah* lady who was not only a very successful zamindar, but was enlightened enough to respond sympathetically to the various reform and literary movements of her time. Her impact, although necessarily indirect, upon these movements was not negligible. In spite of her orthodox life style, she exercised her influence widely and without narrow partisanship.

But the Lady Bountiful of Somendra Chandra's book had an eye to her own interests just like any other shrewd zamindar. She undertook her estate tours not just for the sake of granting *darshan* to her tenants. Such visits to the estates meant money for her. It was customary for zamindars in those days to collect *abwabs* like *agamani* from their tenants when they visited their *mahals*. Sometimes these payments were made under strong protest. The stately progress of Maharani Swarnamayi through her estates, so vividly described by the author, was more than a mere goodwill tour.

If there is a weakness in the book, it is a tendency to overemphasize the element of cordiality in the zamindar-tenant relations in the Cossimbazar estate, and, correlatively, to underemphasize the anti-landlord feeling which erupted from time to time in different parts of the zamindari. That the *raiyats* of the estate had grievances against their landlords is clear from an old document entitled *Kantanama* written by Dewan Manulla Mandal probably in 1840 and published by Nalinikanta Bhattasali in 1913. The author himself has referred to this work in passing in an earlier volume. Gautam Bhadra has analysed the contents of this work in the 1394 Puja number of the Bengali trimonthly *Anustup*. Again, the serious agrarian disturbance in Beldanga in Murshidabad caused much concern to Maharani Swarnamayi in her last ten years when her nephew, Srinath Pal, managed the estate. There are many references to this long-drawn-out conflict in archival records and contemporary news-papers. The author seems to shy away from reporting those problems. It would have been of interest to know what light the Cossimbazar estate papers throw on this agrarian dis-

turbance which continued for over two decades.

In a book of nearly six hundred pages errors of omission and commission are unavoidable. The use of certain terms in the work is open to question. For instance, the author has doubtless Maharani Swarnamayi's tenants in mind when he describes them as "her subjects" (p. 467). A subject exists only in relation to a sovereign. No zamindar in British India, even in a fit of acute megalomania, could dream of exercising sovereign authority in any form. The confusion must have arisen from the Bengali term, *praja*, which is used equivocally in both the senses.

Notwithstanding these minor criticisms, *History of Cossimbazar Raj*, based on much painstaking research, is a remarkable achievement. It is an experience for the reader to follow the fortunes of this zamindar family through its many vicissitudes in the form of complicated legal battles, plots and counter-plots in which, besides the main actors, a number of less important performers played their various parts. The book has much to offer to the students of the history of Bengal in the nineteenth century. Although its theme is the history of a particular family, many additional related subjects are also treated with attention to details. Even the matters relegated to the appendices covering more than fifty pages are in themselves of great interest. These hard data, the delight of serious historians, greatly add to the value of the book. So do the illustrations which evoke a bygone era and its people. The reproductions of the portraits of Harinath and Krishnanath, painted respectively in 1830 and 1842 by an Indian artist, should interest art historians. One wishes one could identify this artist who must be regarded as a pioneer of portrait painting in Bengal.

We shall eagerly await the completion of the series as a quartet or quintet, although, because of its great bulk, the work will undoubtedly be more often mined than read.

Nilmani Mukherjee
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Inside Bureaucracy: Bangladesh, Muntassir Mamoon and Jayanta Kumar Ray, Calcutta: Papyrus, 1987, Pp. 358.

To Chase a Miracle: A Study of the Gramin, Bank of Bangladesh, Jayanta Kumar Ray, Dhaka: The University press, 1987, Pp. 246.

Centre-State Financial Relations in India: A Focus on West Bengal, Jayanta Kumar Ray and Hiroshi Sato, Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economies, 1987, Pp. 191.

Professor Jayanta Kumar Ray has been specialising in bureaucracy's attitudes, motives and functioning in developing countries of South Asia

for quite a long time. He has now presented the fruits of his recent research in collaboration with Muntassir Mamoon. Ray and Mamoon's study of Bangladesh bureaucracy and Ray's own study of the Gramin Bank bureaucracy in Bangladesh provide important insights into the functioning of one of the most important political institutions in Bangladesh. The study by Ray and Sato focuses on the nature of the federal polity in India with special reference to West Bengal. In all these studies the authors have gone into the details of the interaction between bureaucracy, political leadership and the economy. In the context of developing economies this interaction is found to be enormously important in shaping the path and degree of socio-political progress.

In both the studies on Bangladesh, the sketch study method has been used in order to bring out the raw data and real field experience for arriving at realistic conclusions. This method in the study of bureaucracy's way of functioning reveals some insights which could have been missed otherwise. The inquiries regarding the Bangladesh bureaucracy and the operations of the Gramin Bank have been conducted with the help of a few hundred sketches of high-ranking civil and military bureaucrats and of the beneficiaries of the Gramin Bank loan schemes. This is some sort of an achievement, indeed, requiring both patience and pains in conducting field research for unravelling the mysteries of administrative situations.

The bureaucracy in Bangladesh has been studied in four historical phases of East Pakistan (parliamentary rule and military rule) and Bangladesh (parliamentary rule and military rule). The interesting point to note is that the essence of the bureaucracy's rôle in these four phases remains the same; one can even say, in general, that the Bangladeshi bureaucracy carries the habits of its predecessor of the British colonial days. The bureaucrats here have always tried to thwart political development and belittle the importance of elected politicians in the governance of the country. Sometimes unscrupulous politicians whet up the political ambitions of bureaucrats in order to satisfy their own urge for personal aggrandisement. After liberation in 1971, some tension, quite expectedly, developed in the relation between the former Pakistani bureaucrats and the new recruits to the Bangladeshi civil service in regard to posting, promotion and pay scales. In addition, there is the rivalry between civil and military officers. While restructuring the civil service during 1972-80, Bangladesh ended with substituting super elitism for elitism in the civil service. The intercadre and intra-cadre competition for benefits and opportunities has gone to a new height. Additionally, an important cleavage in the civil service has been created over the years by the tension between the generalist and specialist administrators. Among the civil servants in Bangladesh, there is a strong tendency to have a posting in the central secretariat at Dhaka. District posting is lack-lustre, and posting in public undertakings is unattractive as these government agencies enjoy

little autonomy and are virtually controlled in detail by the central secretariat. The authors have found that the restructuring of the civil service in Bangladesh is basically an offshoot of the intra-elite competition-cum-collusion, and that government intervention in social and economic process is resorted to for lending a garb of respectability to the bureaucracy's goal of self-aggrandisement. In this respect Bangladesh is perhaps in the company of many other developing countries including India.

What is peculiar to Bangladesh in recent times is the militarisation of civil administration. Military officers enjoy unduly high status, and frequently they are thrust upon civil administration for sheer self-aggrandisement combined with irresponsibility. Problems of public administration attract the attention of the authority only when something scandalous or a sort of crisis takes place. The authors have wonderfully summarised essential attributes of the bureaucracy in Bangladesh by the five vowel letters: apathy (A), evasiveness (E), incompetence (I), obstructionism (O), and urge for unwarranted authority (U). The only silver lining to this otherwise gloomy picture is that there are some, however small in number, bureaucrats who seem to override the constraints of inequitable social relations as also the lure of self-interest for the purpose of promoting professional ethics and public interest, especially the welfare of the common man.

It is this variety of dedicated public functionaries whom we find at the centre of the success story of the Gramin Bank (GB) which is engaged in fighting out rural poverty without any massive government investment. In studying the Gramin Bank in Bangladesh and author has used the methods of documentary observation, direct observation and interviews with both the officials and the beneficiaries. He has used an unrevealed questionnaire to collect the life profiles of the rural poor served by the Gramin Bank. This study has painstakingly documented the epic struggles of ordinary villagers displaying extraordinary pluck to eliminate destitution and poverty and a significant conclusion emerges that individuals, not huge sum of money and elaborate bureaucracy, matter in determining the degree of social change and that rural poverty can be removed at a relatively low expense within a reasonably short period by a non-revolutionary method.

The Gramin Bank's target groups are the landless persons and the destitutes — people with whom starvation and near-starvation is a way of daily life. Starting as a pilot project launched by Professor Muhammad Yunus of the Department of Economics at Chittagong University in 1976, the Gramin Bank developed into a regular organisation of rural banking by 1983. As of June 1989, it is operating in 12,755 villages. The beneficiaries receive loans which they have to repay in regular weekly instalments. The villagers are to form groups of five loanees, which provide the unconventional collateral and security by reciprocally exercising discipline, pressure and vigilance. The loanees are to undergo one week's training for learning discipline and solidarity. Each such group has its

own office-bearers and a Group Fund and also an Emergency Fund to which the loanees are to contribute. This study shows how quickly the Gramin Bank has succeeded in rescuing paupers from the clutches of unscrupulous creditors, meeting the demand for dowry, protecting village women from exploitation by males, promoting education, encouraging family planning, freeing the mortgaged land and building a high degree of solidarity among the poor villagers. It has been found that the social benefits of GB are so high that its profitability as a purely banking institution should not count. The key to its success story is the dedicated GB officials whom the author christens as the 'relevant bureaucracy'.

Such a "relevant bureaucracy" is found to be free from the usual vices of bureaucracy found in prismatic societies such as laziness, incompetence, meanness and obstructionism. Some of the myths propagated by many social scientists regarding bureaucracy-public relationship is found to be without substance in the case of GB bureaucracy which has developed its own work ethic and a sense of self-fulfilment. The organisational innovations made by this 'relevant bureaucracy' distinguishes it from the traditional governmental bureaucracy. Dishonesty, negligence and apathy are promptly and severely punished. This has helped increase the sense of responsibility among the GB staff. Only one precaution needs to be taken so that the GB staff may not develop into a pressure group with its own vested interests. The whole experiment of GB thus proves to be an interesting challenge to economists, political scientists and administrators throughout the Third World countries.

Compared to the other two studies, the piece on the centre-state financial relations in India appears rather conventional. This is a subject which has been much discussed at various levels since 1967. Ray and Sato have studied the problem both in its broad historical perspectives and also with the focus on West Bengal. That there is an inherent disbalance between the centre's financial resources and those of the states in the Indian federal system is well-known. But Professor Ray deserves special congratulation for his academic openness. He has not only shown how injustice has been done to West Bengal but has also pointed out the chronic dysfunctionalities in West Bengal's state administration which is found to be basically "irresponsible". Particularly shocking is the experience of the public undertakings and state agencies in West Bengal. There seem to be a remarkable similarity in the behavioural and attitudinal pattern of the bureaucracy in Bangladesh and that in West Bengal, although the nature of polity is quite different. Here one can notice how great is the influence of culture on public administration's style of functioning. Unless and until the grave deficiencies in the functioning of administration are removed by introducing proper accountability through a suitable reward-punishment structure, things may not improve in the states of the Indian Union even after some of the glaring disbalances in the centre-state financial

relations are rectified.

In fine, the three studies under review have one common theme, namely, the urgent need of making public bureaucracy fully responsible as well as responsive to the people in the broad political sense. The social scientists and policy-makers in the developing Third World countries, especially in south and south-east Asia, would, no doubt, benefit immensely from these three studies.

Asokh Mukhopadhyay
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CALCUTTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual Report 1988

The Calcutta Tercentenary Programme and the Annual Lecture delivered by Professor Saiyid Nurul Hasan, former Governor of West Bengal and Patron of the Calcutta Historical Society are highlights of the years' activities.

Annual Lecture

On February 16, 1988 members of the Executive Council were invited to tea at Raj Bhavan to meet the Patron of the Society, Professor Saiyid Nurul Hasan. He showed a keen interest in delivering the annual lecture on Major Polier on whom Professor P. C. Gupta, President of the Society, had done pioneering work. The Governor was assured of all research facilities and necessary materials were provided for the lecture. The annual lecture on :

1' *Jāz-i-Arsatani being the Persian Letters of Major Polier* was held at the National Library auditorium on March 24, 1988.

Resignations :

In May and June, 1988, we received three letters of resignation from Mr. Arabinda Ray, Honorary Secretary ; Dr. S.C. Nandy, Vice President ; and Mr. Alope Bose, Administrative Officer. They were all requested by the Executive Council to reconsider their decision. It was only after hearing from them again that the Executive Council accepted the resignations of Mr. Arabinda Ray on 1st December, 1988, and Dr. S.C. Nandy on March 9, 1988. Mr. Alope Bose decided to stay on till he finally left on December 15, 1988.

Operational Office :

The operational office had to be shifted at Mr. Ray's request from his residence at 34 Allenby Road, Calcutta 20. It is now centrally located at 7 Ballygunge Circular Road, Calcutta 19. The registered office remains at Bijay Manzil, 10A Diamond Harbour Road, Calcutta 27.

Tercentenary Lectures in Collaboration with the Asiatic Society :

It took the Society one major academic decision to move out of the summer doldrums. The President expressed his desire that at least ten of the tercentenary lectures should be held in collaboration with the Asiatic Society, in their premises, and this was unanimously supported in the Executive Council. We thank Dr. Ashin Das Gupta, Administrator, Asiatic Society for his co-operation in this matter. The programme of lectures has evoked

member response. Every lecture has been announced in the papers so that those interested could attend. The first two lectures delivered in 1988 were :

The Prinsep Family by Mr. A.C. Staples, Retd. Vice Principal, M.L. Teachers College, Western Australia. November 7, 1988.

Fabrication of Ourselves : Images of Calcutta Merchants in the Collection of the Peabody Museum of Salem, by Dr. Susan Bean, Chief Curator, Peabody Museum Massachusetts, USA: November 30, 1988.

Grants in Aid

During the year we received the first instalment of an important grant for three volumes of *Bengal Past and Present*, Vols 103-105, from the Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi, amounting to Rs. 14,250/-, the total sanctioned grant being Rs. 15,000/-. We express our gratitude to Dr. Irfan Habib, Chairman of ICHR, for the interest he has shown in our work. The Honorary Editor, Dr. Hiren Chakraborty, Secretary and Curator of Victoria Memorial has been preoccupied the whole year with the *Special 80th Birthday Number of Bengal Past and Present*, Vol. 106, Parts I & II, Nos. 202-203, 1987, and its unique contents consisting of materials which have appeared in the journal since its inception in 1907. It also includes a history of the Society for the last eighty years written by Dr. D.P. Sinha, Vice President. The Special Number has been well received and is likely to attract funds. We are grateful to the Bibliography Division of the National Library for preparing the *Index of Bengal Past and Present 1907-1985* which remains a special priced publication of the Calcutta Historical Society. As both these publications have appeared in 1989, the position in respect of grants from various sources will be the subject of later reports. The West Bengal Government grant of Rs. 1,000/- is expected to be received shortly and the delay is due to movements of office and staff in the period. It will be our endeavour to secure an increase of this grant to Rs. 5,000/-.

Advertisements

We have secured Rs. 2,000/- in advertisements from Mr. D.P. Chakraborty, Vice President, and extend our thanks to him. Printed forms for these advertisements are now ready, and we appeal to members to help us meet rising costs so that the journal *Bengal Past and Present* may be made upto date.

Membership

We have had to postpone the Annual General Meeting by two months as the papers received from the previous operational office on Dec., 15, 1988,

needed adequate scrutiny. There was no membership list as such and the AGM list dated 7th March, 1988, was not quite in accordance with Article 1 (c) /iv of the Memorandum of Association of the Calcutta Historical Society which states :

“No member whose membership-fee after-enrolment as member is not paid upto date shall be eligible to participate in any meeting or enjoy the privilege of membership”.

The legal luminaries who started the Society registered it with certain ends in view. We therefore felt that caution and accountability, as also upholding a uniform principle should be the touchstone on which our work should be judged in years to come. The collection from membership has been commendable all through the year. The effective membership, that is those who had paid their dues upto 1987, stood at seventy-nine at the time of the last Annual General Meeting. We make a fervent appeal to members to pay their dues and clear the backlog.

Amendments

At the last Annual General Meeting held on March 24, 1988, there was an amendment to the Memorandum of Association as follows :

“Resolved that a new clause 2 (ii) (a) be introduced between clause 2 (ii) and 2 (iii) as follows :

The Executive Council shall have the power to co-opt, nominate, or appoint persons from the existing members who are not elected members of the Executive Council, not exceeding three persons in number. Such co-opted member/s will hold office till the next Annual General Meeting and till then, will enjoy the status of an elected member. Further, such persons shall not be debarred from being appointed to or from holding any other executive positions under the Society”.

In accordance with this amendment Mr. R. T. L. Sykes and Dr. Arun Das Gupta were co-opted into the Executive Council on April 12, 1988, till the next annual general meeting.

Administration

For the better part of the year the President has been exercising emergency powers under Article 8 (iii) of the Memorandum of Association of the Calcutta Historical Society. It was on the 14th of February, 1989, that the Executive Council “Resolved that Miss Basanti Mitra be elected Secretary, in accordance with Article 2 (iv) /c of the Memorandum of Association of the Calcutta Historical Society, till the next annual general meeting and elections”.

The Executive Council

The Executive Council has met regularly, and, these meetings have been

hosted by Dr. Ashin Das Gupta, Vice President of the Society and Director, National Library.

Dr. S. C. Nandy, Vice President at his residence, Cossimbazar House ; and Mr. D. P. Chakraborty at the Bengal Club. From July, 1988, all meetings of the Executive Council were held at the President's former residence, 125 Rashbehari Avenue, Calcutta 700 029, a house which has been known for two generations for its literary work and meetings. We are deeply grateful for the kind hospitality on these occasions.

Acknowledgements

We thank Mrs. Geeta Mallik for her personal supervision of the tea and refreshments served for the Governor's lecture on March 24, 1988, at the National Library ; and the Director, Dr. Ashin Das Gupta and staff of the National Library for the arrangements on the occasion. Miss Manikuntala Sarkar, Assistant Public Relations Officer of the Asiatic Society, has helped in every way to make a success of the programme of the Calcutta Tercentenary lectures. From the 14th of February, 1989, she has by resolution of the Executive Council been assisting in the work of the Calcutta Historical Society. Finally, we thank all those members for their keen interest in the programme of lectures which has brought a breath of life to the Calcutta Historical Society in the past year.

May 27, 1989.

Basanti Mitra
(Honorary Secretary)

CALCUTTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BUDGET OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR 1989

RECEIPTS	1989	PAYMENTS	1989
Subscription	35,000	Staff Expenses & Administration Charge	10,000
Sale of Publications	5,000	Stationery & Printing	1,000
Advertisement	5,000	Bank Charges	1,000
Grant — Govt. of West Bengal	1,000	Postage	2,000
I.C.H.R.	10,000	Conveyance & Contingency	500
Interest	500	Audit Fees	500
		Printing Charges of Journal	30,000
		Meeting Expenses, Lectures, Tours etc.	5,000
		Registration Fees	005
		Lawyers	
	<hr/> 56,500 <hr/>		<hr/> 50,005 <hr/>

CALCUTTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1988

Previous Year FUNDS & LIABILITIES:
GENERAL FUND:

Up to last year 48,820.08
Add: Excess of Income over Expenditure for the year transferred from Income and Expenditure A/c. 14,533.30

Previous Year PROPERTY & ASSETS:
SUBSCRIPTIONS RECEIVABLE:

As per last Balance Sheet Before 1984 B.f. 2,830.00
Less: Realised during the Yr. 385.34

For 1984 B.f. 4,360.00
Less: Realised 776.28

LIABILITIES FOR EXPENSES:

1,837.80 As per last Balance Sheet 1,837.80

For 1985 B.f. 12,100.00
Less: Realised 2,481.08

For 1986 B.f. 12,500.00
Less: Realised 3,220.89

For 1987 B.f. 12,500.00
Less: Realised 7,589.72

44,290.00 For 1988 B.f. Nil

29,886.69

50,657.88

Total Rs. 65,211.18

50,657.88

Rs. 65,211.18

We have examined the above Balance Sheet of CALCUTTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY as at 31st December, 1988 and the annexed Receipts and Payments Account and Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st December, 1988 with the books of accounts and vouchers of the Society and we have found it to be in accordance therewith.

2 Church Lane, 2nd floor
Calcutta 700 001

Dated the 5th May, 1989

Sd/- D. C. PAL & CO.
Chartered Accountants.

CALCUTTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1988

<p>17 Previous year</p> <p>To Opening Balances:</p> <p>Cash in Hand 41.88</p> <p>Cash at Bank 1,926.05</p> <p>Fixed Deposit 5,000.00</p> <hr/> <p>9,615.92</p> <p>Subscription:</p> <p>From Members for the year before 1984 335.34</p> <p>" 1985 776.28</p> <p>" 1986 2,481.08</p> <p>" 1987 3,220.89</p> <p>" 1988 7,589.72</p> <hr/> <p>14,408.31</p> <p>For 1988 16,592.21</p> <hr/> <p>30,995.52</p> <p>250.00</p> <hr/> <p>31,779.75</p>	<p>Previous year</p> <p>By Staff Expenses 7,500.00</p> <p>" Printing & Stationary including printing 34,314.90</p> <p>" Charges of Journals 838.34</p> <p>" Bank Charges 299.55</p> <p>" Conveyance & Contingency 5.00</p> <p>" Registration Fees Nil</p> <p>" Miscellaneous Expenses ...</p> <p>" Legal Charges 95.00</p> <p>" Meeting Expenses 1,731.50</p> <p>" Lecturers 2,250.00</p> <p>" Administrative Charges 2,317.50</p> <p>" Postage & Telegram 375.00</p> <p>" Audit Fee ...</p> <p>" Interim Audit Fee 14,408.31</p>	<p>PAYMENTS:</p> <p>By Staff Expenses 7,500.00</p> <p>" Printing & Stationary including printing 34,314.90</p> <p>" Charges of Journals 838.34</p> <p>" Bank Charges 299.55</p> <p>" Conveyance & Contingency 5.00</p> <p>" Registration Fees Nil</p> <p>" Miscellaneous Expenses ...</p> <p>" Legal Charges 95.00</p> <p>" Meeting Expenses 1,731.50</p> <p>" Lecturers 2,250.00</p> <p>" Administrative Charges 2,317.50</p> <p>" Postage & Telegram 375.00</p> <p>" Audit Fee ...</p> <p>" Interim Audit Fee 14,408.31</p>
<p>From Corporate 1,750.00</p> <p>To Sale of Journals 6,398.00</p> <p>Advertisement 400.00</p> <p>Interest on Fixed Deposit from Bank 401.00</p> <p>Grant from I.C.H.R. 5,730.00</p> <hr/> <p>56,094.67</p>	<p>6,367.88</p> <p>31,245.52</p> <p>9,081.00</p> <p>2,450.00</p> <p>200.00</p> <p>14,250.00</p> <hr/> <p>63,544.40</p>	<p>28,219.91</p> <p>270.93</p> <p>30,053.56</p> <p>5,000.00</p> <hr/> <p>35,324.49</p>
<p>GRAND TOTAL Rs. 63,544.40</p>		<p>GRAND TOTAL Rs. 63,544.40</p>

2 Church Lane, 2nd floor
 Calcutta 700 001
 Dated the 5th May, 1989

Sd/- D. C. PAL & CO.
 Chartered Accountants.

CALCUTTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Index to Bengal Past and Present 1907-1985 Rs. 80.00
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with Introduction by N. K. Sinha Rs. 50.00
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1989

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