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Materialism, Mutiny and Modernization in British India

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British rule in India probably was in the reformist van of colonial regimes, but by Independence relatively few among the Indian populace had benefited notably from Western 'modernization'. Although praised lavishly by a past generation of English historians for equipping India for 'rapid progress' under 'the rule of law', British policies hardly represented exemplary social engineering or 'transformed' the prosperity, health, well being, education or career opportunities of most Indians.[1] Early in its sway the British raj conceived of implanting on the subcontinent modes of development responsible for England's rapid progress and prosperity and the advance of its peoples. Why, then, was the success not greater of Western programs, and why did policies of economic development leave at mid-twentieth century a majority of Indians living below poverty levels drawn close to subsistence? Was Western 'reformism' materially exploitative, or promising but checked by the regime's major political disturbance, the 'Mutiny' or Revolt of 1857, or were British policies culturally suppressive, or is more complex analysis needed to comprehend the Western impact?

Focus on the human consequences of British rule impels observation that attempting rapidly to 'transform' the condition of a great people whose lives were ordered by a formidable indigenous civilization was an extraordinary undertaking, demanding wide-ranging, protracted, coherent innovations that influenced markedly human existence, affected established institutions and practices, and increased the productivity, mobility and income of the multitudes. British policies probably were less materially exploitive, culturally

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[1] Reginald Coupland, *Britain and India* (London, 1941), 31–2; Sir Percival Griffiths, *The British Impact on India* (London, 1952), 479; Lilian Knowles, *Economic Development of the British Overseas Empire* (London, 1925), 274, 329–33.

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'colonizing' or conservative after 1857 than sometimes was supposed. More than has been acknowledged, however, they supported staunchly key features of India's existing civilization, especially fundamental laws and customs regulating human conduct. A literate minority, especially those who were Western-educated, mostly from high and commercial castes, penetrated the 'modern' sector and the prestigious Civil Service, established industrial enterprises, purchased land, often prospered from reforms and eventually led a nationalist movement to end colonial rule. The British reform agenda was incomplete, though, investing little directly in 'social capital'; Western policies didn't educate the ordinary populace or impart widely comprehension of essential features of Westernism. The predominantly illiterate masses were little able to benefit from land and other economic reforms, rarely obtained prosperous business, professional or government employments and didn't contribute substantially to more rapid economic growth, partly because they lacked education, capital and were subject to established laws, village relations and the domination of superiors in local hierarchies. Western policies of economic growth sometimes were unwary as well as insufficient: millions suffered 'death by development'—the epidemic and endemic diseases provoked inadvertently by social and environmental consequences of material projects, but there was no government attempt to disseminate ideas of microbial medicine, to transform popular hygiene nor systematically to achieve environmental reclamation. Later, as immunities rose and disease mortality declined, foreign rule left unaffected existing fertility practices and intense population pressure was induced, a culminating unexpected consequence of contradictory, conflicting development policies.

In recent decades disappointing material and human consequences of British rule sometimes were attributed to condign capitalist exploitation: the British imperial 'metropole' extracted all the advantages of international economic exchange, while India as degenerating colonial 'satellite' experienced 'the development of underdevelopment.'[2] This thesis apparently lent credibility to claims of nationalist leaders Dadabhai Naoroji and Romesh Dutt that the British imperium 'drained' wealth from India to pay for expensive projects, and administrators who served English interests. Or, British rule initially exhibited vigorous reformism, it was held, but after the

[2] André Gunder Frank, 'The Development of Underdevelopment', *Monthly Review*, XVIII, 4, Sept. 1966, 7–31.

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Revolt of 1857 abandoned any zeal for progress, leaving India to experience a long, lassitudinous twilight of imperial domain, a century of conservative rule and limited reform activity.[3] Alternately, a subtle, sophisticated British regime purportedly 'colonized' Indians culturally, trying to addict them to Western ideas, tastes and medicine, to induce a more supine colonial people to acquiesce more readily to foreign control and exploitation, an application of Antonio Gramsci's thesis on socio-political subjugation.[4]

Perhaps deserving most concerted attention are recent, suggestive interpretations by Partha Chatterjee, D. A. Washbrook, David Arnold, Ashish Nandy, Ranajit Guha, and others, which focused on indigenous impulses for India's development and emphasized as subtext British endeavours and power to subvert indigenous progress by disseminating Western ideas and practices.[5] They often attributed to British rule an intimidating, growing colonialism which suppressed India's material growth or cultural identity. Newer interpretations of colonialism in India sometimes refurbished creatively Marxist methodology with indigenous experience, but more frequently expressed post-Modernist interests in the mentalities and power relations of the inarticulate and dispossessed. Frequently they portrayed Western influence as a formidable, mainstream political and cultural force which degraded and submerged important Indian experience, or they depicted a survival of historic practices amidst the community, and the healthy evolution of indigenous trends, outside the penumbra of Western paradigms of progress. They concentrated less on exploring the exercise of political dominion than on economic development, culture and power, class, community, health, environment, and the 'subaltern' experience of the ordinary populace. These interpretations generally treated as central to India's progress its pre-Western experiences and historic institutions. Minimizing any dynamic, beneficient modernization through imported institutions, they focused primarily on how the British affected continuity or disjunction in secular indigenous development.

[3] Hugh Tinker, '1857 and 1957: The Mutiny and Modern India', *International Affairs*, XXIV, 1958, 63; T. R. Metcalf, *Aftermath of Revolt* (Princeton, 1964), 171, 320–4, 327.

[4] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections From Prison Notebooks* (London, 1971), 12.

[5] Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments* (Princeton, 1993); D. A. Washbrook, 'Progress and Problems: South Asian Economic and Social History, 1720–1860', *Modern Asian Studies*, XXII, 1988, 57–96; David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body* (Berkeley, 1994); Ashis Nandy, The *Intimate Enemy* (Delhi, 1983); Ranajit Guha, *An Indian Historiography of India* (Calcutta, 1988).

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Some striking views attributed to British rule a vast, dangerous power or undertaking to destroy or desecrate indigenous practices. D. A. Washbrook concluded that 'South Asia was involved in the social history of capitalism from a very early period,' comparable to Western Europe; but foreign rule and money annexed 'the privileges previously possessed by indigenous capital,' reduced Indian investment to 'petty roles in money lending and commodity peddling,' and bore 'prime responsibility for India's underdevelopment and inability to adopt, imitate or respond to European industrialization'.[6] Guha emphasized how Western education was an 'hegemonic instrument' to persuade 'the subject people of the desirability of its own subjugation,' an effort he thought Indian literati struggled against with 'fearless criticism'.[7] Arnold wrote of 'colonizing the [Indian] body', as Western medicine spread in the nineteenth century.[8] Chatterjee and the 'subaltern' school stressed rescuing Indian culture from marginalization by European technology and from Western claims that its experience served as paradigm for 'the universal history of progress'.[9] And Nandy defined colonialism as 'a disorder of the historical self', which deprived Indians of identity and which needed 'to be defeated in the minds of men'.[10]

Their hypotheses often brilliantly wrought, variant critiques of British influence seem contradicted by the descernible realities of colonial India's historical experience. The substantial growth of modern Indian manufacturing—in contrast to the relative stagnation of popular income—controverts the portrait of a colonial 'satellite', becoming more materially backward with each increment of contact with the dominating imperial metropole. Numerous reform

[6] Washbrook, 81–4.

[7] Guha, *Historiography*, 24; *Dominance Without Hegemony* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997), 197. In the latter work, Guha portrayed cultural conflicts between British attempts to 'appropriate' and 'annex' Indian history and Indians who exercised 'an "independent critical attitude" toward British historians of India'. It is agreed here that British reformers attempted to occupy the commanding heights of Indian civilization, and wished to transform it. Purposeful British policies, however, of accepting most established laws and customs, of avoiding direct, systematic intrusion upon social practices, and of leaving the ordinary populace illiterate meant that the overwhelming numbers were barely affected by Western culture, remained responsive to indigenous cultural symbols, and that Gandhi, for example, could harness 'the mass and energy of popular mobilization to his campaigns' by employing those symbols and paradigms. See Guha, *Dominance*, 142–3, 194–5.

[8] Arnold, title page and *passim*.

[9] Chatterjee, 238.

[10] Nandy, 55, 63.

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and development initiatives after 1857—the rise of one of the world's leading systems of modern transport, the globe's greatest amount of irrigated agriculture, Western-oriented universities, the evolutionary advance of representative institutions, the large influx of Indians into the Civil Service, the Nobel prize winning discovery of the transmission of malaria, major findings on plague and other diseases, the emergence of innovative, life-saving, village-oriented famine relief policies, and the government's experimental nutritional programs for poor school children, didn't equate with sketches of an aging, dogged John Bull, maintaining order but devoid of reformist inclination, energy or imagination. Conversely, the limited diffusion of Western learning among the ordinary populace, which remained overwhelmingly illiterate, culturally Sanskritic, Islamic or otherwise 'Oriental', untutored in Western ideas, and ruled by the precepts of caste councils and customary village practices more than by any new tables of law or administrative mechanisms, these and other instances of pervasive, pertinacious indigenous beliefs and behaviors varied sharply from the concept of the European cultural colonization of the Indian populace, most of whom didn't know what Westernism meant. What, then, accounts for failures of the growth of Indian manufacturing and commerce and the infiltration of Western knowledge to significantly increase popular living standards or stimulate social transformation?

Western reformism, in fact, illustrated considerable continuity into the twentieth century, and some important development programs gained force after 1857. British policies were flawed less by material exploitation or cultural colonization or post-Mutiny loss of energy than because they were imbalanced, incomplete and sometimes contradictory, relied for social transformation and popular uplift too much on economic development and the English education of an Indian elite, under-invested in primary education and health, failed to transmit their ideas of progress to the populace, and inadvertently undercut their own ideals by adopting most of India's classical and customary law, which dictated behavior often at odds with British objectives. The state's divergent commitments to 'progress' and, alternately, nonintervention were defined by sphere of activity, not period of time. British policies uniformly were assertive materially through the history of the raj and they constantly were socially cautious and intent on not directly disturbing the mores and cultural beliefs of the Indian masses. They never presented an integrated, broad-based program for progress which could influence all the con-

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stituent features involved in 'development' and human uplift, and they often were environmentally unsound. The regime's sometimes inconsistent, paradoxical mix of policies was sustained and strengthened through the ordeal of the 'Mutiny', and elaborated thereafter during the 'high noon' of empire, increasing impressively aggregate economic growth and failing to transform or benefit materially most of the populace.

In distinction, progress in England featured institutions and policies emerging from historical circumstances promoting belief in the inherent capacities and 'rationality' of people of all ranks. Substantial individual decision-making was accompanied necessarily by the concept of an organic society in which any individual or group could hinder or harm the development of the community, and comprehension among the educated that for their vision of 'rational' progress to prevail the masses had to be acculturated to adopt middle class values and behavior. Indian civilization, however, had its own, different modes of progress, which had utility in context of its technological and industrial status. Central, formative themes had been how to achieve economic growth, sustain civilization and increase occupational efficiency, given the relatively limited per capita agricultural surplus and without great technological mechanization or the means for mass education. Resolutions had emphasized hereditary occupations—maintaining and improving economic specializations through inter-generational learning—siphoning much of the surplus from the ordinary cultivating populace to support administrative, military and civilizing activities, and reliance on population growth to spread the network of villages and territorial control of indigenous states and to provide increased aggregate revenues for governance, armed forces, and civilizing works. This mode of progress justified social hierarchies and restraints on individual mobility through doctrines of the inequalities of human capacities. The civilization had strong social controls and was ill-suited to benefit uniformly from or conform to British methods of popular advancement based on a hypothetically even-handed individual material competition. Indian civilization mediated the effects of Western policies as well as being influenced by them, since indigenous laws were ensconed at the core of Anglo-Indian jurisprudence, and a predominantly illiterate people, uneducated in Westerism, for long acted in accord usually with indigenous precepts.

The contrasting dimensions of British policy were engaged fully in attempting to reform or accommodate Indian society before mid-

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nineteenth century. When 'Mutiny' caused a reassessment of policies, there was a substantial consensus at Calcutta and Whitehall for more legislative consultation with Indian interest groups, a prelude to later, cumulative concessions toward representative governance, and there was an end to annexing heirless principalities. For the politics of 'progress' and 'transformation', however, modest adjustments at the margins shouldn't obscure that mainstay positions were strengthened: more economic development, more English education of Indian elites, more rigorous avoidance of intrusion upon indigenous social practices, unless cadres of Indians demanded it. Implacably, by intensifying after 1857 a dynamism of development manifesting Social Darwinism, creating great differentials in benefits between educated or commercial classes and ordinary multitudes, leaving much of the populace illiterate, poor, bound to existing social conventions and little able to participate in 'grass roots' modernization, a magnification of disappointing or dire results was assured by the late nineteenth century.

What, then, was the early British vision and practice of progress in India, and how did it influence indigenous institutions and beliefs—and ultimately individual Indian prosperity? Perhaps to crack open the doors at Whitehall for widespread, ambitious—even radical—reform, leading intellectuals, officials and authorities on India, including Charles Grant, Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, T. B. Macaulay and others avowed that Indians were 'sunk in darkness, vice and misery' due to 'despotic', rapacious, 'wretched' governance and 'unjust and ferocious' laws and social institutions, such as caste strictures, purdah and sati, which suppressed individual opportunity, dealt cavalierly with human life, and hindered economic development.[11]

The British program of 'rapid improvement' amalgamated Free Trade, Utilitarian, cultural and other reform ideas, but excluded direct social intervention for human improvement. Good governance and legal reforms would facilitate economic development, and Western education would increase Indians' scientific, technological and social knowledge. The consequence would be the breakup of a suppressive social order and the emergence of a more benign, progress-

[11] James Mill, *A History of British India* (reprint, N.Y., 1968), I, 334; John Bowring (ed.), *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, 'The Influence of Time and Place on Matters of Legislation', I (New York, Reissued 1967), 175; Charles Grant, *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain* (privately printed, 1797), 220; Ainslie Embree, *Charles Grant and British Rule in India* (N.Y., 1962), 119.

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oriented, prosperous society. The British purportedly held India for the sub-continent's steady intellectual enrichment and 'enlightenment', to carefully induce improvement in indigenous behavior, 'institutions' and social practices, and especially to supplant illogical, untenable 'caste' structures, which impoverished the lower orders, barred them from 'profitable employments', and ignored their individual talents.[12] There were leading, early nineteenth-century British officials who didn't share beliefs in the 'sudden and miraculous . . . progress of human societies', or in the 'modern doctrine of the rapid improvement of the Hindoos'.[13] Among them were Thomas Munro, Charles Metcalfe, and John Malcolm, but they promulgated major reforms nevertheless, under the exigencies of creating sound provincial administration.

For circumventing caste repression of individual choice and ability, Free Traders noted, British policies of economic development would provide a new route to prosperity, open to all, allowing merit to rise, minimizing and dispelling caste influence. Through the advance of energetic peasants to land owners, and skilled artisans to master craftsmen, a new circulation of classes would occur, invigorating Indian society and improving its economic productivity.[14] Talent would rise and become suffused with Western ideas, subverting India's 'theological organization and predestined, hereditary status'.[15] Social reform and new learning were to complement policies of economic development. Good, objective governance and 'comprehensive . . . rational codes' of law, emerging from the 'the universal science of jurisprudence,' and including a 'fair mode of taxation', James Mill stressed, would secure 'individual property and person', stimulate a 'vast transformation' in 'Indian society', boosting it 'up the scale of civilization'; therefore, 'human conduct' would be 'canalized into the beneficial . . . course of economic development' and social advancement.[16] Progress also was viewed as cultural and intellectual. The recent 'great advances' in the West, Macaulay emphasized, had outmoded the 'greatest intellects' of the past, English had become the repository of all 'the vast intellectual wealth which all the wisest nations' had created, and English education must be the

[12] *The Economist*, XV, 1231 (Nov. 7, 1857).
[13] Eric Stokes, *The English Utilitarians and India* (London, 1959), 16, 24.
[14] *The Economist*, XV, 1231.
[15] *Ibid*.
[16] Stokes, *Utilitarians*, 56.

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mechanism of cultural transformation of the subcontinent.[17] British ideas for 'sudden progress' emphasized essentially the material and cultural rise of Indian multitudes and the better employment of their inherent capacities for developing the subcontinent. In practice, policies of economic development obtained more scope, formidable political backing—even pressure from Manchester interests—and financial support. Development projects like railroads, trunk roads, harbor works and irrigation canals were remunerative and promised to return rupees to the Indian exchequer. They were profitable investment for Western financiers and the source of a rich British trade. The 'weapon of the law' was envisaged as the basis of a revolution in society, but was harder to wield, and English education would spread 'European civilization', but not overnight.[18]

The ideas need major revision that Western reformers ever advocated or wanted direct governmental intrusion upon Indian social institutions and practices or that British rule was bifurcated into separate spheres, with reformism ascendant in the first half of the nineteenth century and conservatism dominant thereafter. Utilitarian theories and practices of reform of the 1830s never recommended or implemented sweeping, direct social interventionism, policies that didn't exist partly because Benthamite leaders disavowed them completely. In the early nineteenth century, Jeremy Bentham and James Mill had monumental schemes for transforming India through Utilitarian precepts and policies; but Bentham condemned as misguided any 'hot headed' intrusion upon 'odious' Indian social customs. Despite his repulsion at India's prevalent, 'unjust and ferocious' prejudices and fierce implementation of sati, infanticide, purdah, caste strictures and barbaric disposition of pariahs who broke them, Bentham excoriated 'innovators' who attacked prejudice and folly wantonly.[19] He recommended indirect means of undercutting barbaric customs: sati should be voluntary, allowed when widows were adamant; purdah should be skirted in criminal affairs by appointing female police officers. British administrators who were

[17] Thomas Babington Macaulay, 'Minute on Education', Feb. 2, 1835, in *Macaulay Prose and Poetry*, selected by G. M. Young, second impression (Cambridge, Mass., 1967), 723–4; Macaulay, 'Sir James Macintosh', in *Critical and Historical Essays Thomas Babington Lord Macaulay*, selected by Hugh Trevor-Roper (N.Y., 1965), 662–3.

[18] Macaulay, 'Minute', 723–4, 729.

[19] Bentham, 'Time and Place', 180–1.

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familiar with India's social 'climate . . . manners . . . legal customs . . . religion' could use Utilitarian precepts of 'pains and pleasures' to induce enlightened conduct.[20] James Mill, Bentham's 'chief lieutenant' and the 'chief executive' of the East India Company, as Eric Stokes explained, was 'too good a Benthamite to suggest a frontal assault on Indian customs and prejudices.'[21] He favored instead 'individual property rights' and reform of the law as the 'solvent' of 'primitive' communal society. Utilitarianism always was a bulwark against head-on confrontation with Indian culture, not a vanguard for revolutionary social innovations.

Socially reforming impulses of the British in India, then, only tentatively and occasionally were expressed as *direct* government policy. Before 1857 the British accomplished several important social innovations; but momentous acts as abolishing sati and legalizing widow remarriage were an outgrowth of judicial reforms targeted primarily at terminating horrific death penalties. The imposition of British criminal law abolished dismembering counterfeiters with razors, mutilating and killing upper caste women for fornicating with low caste men, crucifying housebreakers and dacoits.[22] Sati immolated the victim, but since, unusually, death was not punishment for an illegal act, the practice was not caught in the web of British reforms of the criminal law and required special legislation. Abolition of sati was not undertaken, however, until 1829, by an extremely reform-minded Governor General, Lord Bentinck; it hardly induced a rash of explicit interferences with Hindu and Muslim social customs. Widow remarriage was the natural corollary of forbidding sati, but it wasn't allowed in law until Lord Dalhousie's reformist Governor Generalship two decades later, and seldom was practiced thereafter. The British were conscious always of the dangers to a small ruling elite of imposing their own mores on the Indian population. Once they reformed practices which led to dire, easily discernible, horrid human destruction, they exhausted their strongest impulses for direct social reform and stood haltingly at the labyrinthine no-man's land of Indian social practices without finding any clear mandate to enter this dangerous terrain.

The British expected to obtain the social transformation of India and popular uplift by indirect methods, and the most important was

[20] *Ibid*.
[21] Stokes, 69.
[22] Madras State Archives, *Madras Revenue Consultations*, CII-A, 'Observations by Mr. Duncan on the Administration of Justice', 1023–88.

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economic modernization, through which they might create a new Indian economic individualism and demolish the effect of Hindu social and religious traditionalism. Clearly, before the Mutiny the idea of economic modernization was the most active carrier of British notions of India's transformation. Compared to the relatively scanty list of direct social innovations, before 1857 Indian economic affairs received concerted attention, and reforms facilitated the rise of commercial and capitalist agriculture, while the transfer of new technology, development of transportation, and emergence of a Westernized commercial middle class provided pre-conditions for modern Indian industrial enterprise.[23] British land law and policies of tenure and assessment were important to the modernizing ethos. Full recognition of private rights to property was meant by the British to stimulate easy sale and mortgage and to nurture a steady flow of capital to the land. Partition of joint estates was encouraged and the attempt made to transform feudal and communal tenures into modern private property.[24] While Thomas Munro in Madras, Mountstuart Elphinstone in Bombay and others elsewhere had endorsed peasant land tenures, James Mill led Utilitarians who saw the *ryotwari* or peasant settlement as an instrument of agrarian development and human progress. Through model farms and agricultural experiments the British sought to stimulate the *ryot* to raise sugar, cotton, tobacco, wheat, and other lucrative export commodities. They envisaged the emergence of a broad class of petty entrepreneurs and agrarian improvers whose ample profits would uplift their living standards, knowledge and social status. The chaos induced by the attempt to levy 'scientific assessments' didn't weaken British convictions that their economic policies held the key to Indian prosperity and social advancement.[25]

More specifically, the Free Trade idea emphasized development and transformation. Applying theories by Adam Smith and David Ricardo on natural and comparative advantage, British rulers aimed to develop India as a producer of primary materials, which it would

[23] D. H. Buchanan, *The Development of Capitalistic Enterprise in India* (N.Y., 1934), 27–74.

[24] See for example, Bombay Presidency, *Selections from the Records*, new series, no. 278 (1884), *passim*.

[25] For a full discussion of the Utilitarian approach to agrarian change, see Stokes, 80–101; see also Ira Klein, 'Utilitarianism and Agrarian Progress in Western India', *Economic History Review*, Second Series, XVIII (1965), 576–97; Bombay, *Selections*, old series, no. 12 (1853), 34.

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sell to the West for industrial products. India would obtain earnings for modern transport, and previously isolated districts would escape famine's worst ravages. Breaking down tariff barriers would give village producers access to Western markets, and allow the free domestic circulation of cheap Western manufactures. Through mid-nineteenth century, Indian tariffs were lowered steadily toward the Free Trade ideal, and by the early 1830s a fierce attack was launched on restrictions on internal trade, which dictated that 'even a buffalo load of oil seed' couldn't be moved from one village to another without 'a pass . . . from the nearest customs house', perhaps 'one hundred miles away'.[26] Concerted efforts were made by the British to improve agricultural produce and technology, and transport modernization by the 1850s led to a boomlet in railway construction. British material changes and the rapid growth of the India trade promoted economic development as fulcrum of post-Mutiny policy, supported by Whitehall, Lombard Street, Manchester and by British mercantile houses in Calcutta and Bombay.

The infusion of Western science, economic and political ideas, culture and technology also seemed important to British reformers, but they envisaged themselves only as introducing a process which it was the task of educated Indians to complete, and they expected this dissemination widely to occur. Buoyed because the English were 'the greatest and most highly civilized people ever the world saw', as Macaulay thought, English philosophers found in India the perfect arena for optimistic notions of a 'sudden, sweeping transformation' of society, and they viewed English education as another important means of achieving it.[27] In contrast to eloquent, optimistic British theories and pronouncements, however, the educational record varied at different academic levels from progressive to dismal. They believed firmly in the superiority of English education, whose 'diffusion' would bring incalculable 'benefits', and in forming a class 'Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, opinions, in morals, in intellect', which they attempted to create through English-language colleges and universities.[28] But early nineteenth-century British reformers never intended to educate 'the millions', the 'body of the people', for India's 'limited means' made it 'impossible', Macaulay claimed. Instead they anticipated that Western learning

[26] C. E. Trevelyan, *A Report Upon the Inland Custom and Town Duties of the Bengal Presidency* (Calcutta, 1834), 57.
[27] Macaulay, 'Macintosh', 168.
[28] Macaulay, 'Minute', 729.

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and civilization would trickle-down to the masses from Anglicized Indians through the 'vernacular dialects', a doubtful notion, later disavowed because of the segregated, impervious layers of India's hierarchical society.[29]

Western rulers hypothesized ephemerally about enhancing vernacular education; they had no thought of direct cultural diffusion or 'colonization' of village children through English grade schools and no scheme for mass primary education. India at the advent of British rule had 'hardly a village', however 'small', that lacked 'at least one school', and had 'more in larger villages' and 'many in every town'.[30] Many villagers struggled to 'educate their children at more than ordinary sacrifice', but family 'poverty' and economic strain drew pupils back to the fields, 'after a year', and they lost rudimentary literacy.[31] Indigenous village schools usually were humble, short on resources, educationally restricted to primary subjects and socially conservative, but they whetted a real, popular appetite for learning.[32] If the British kept a 'tight financial rein' on primary education through the nineteenth century, blaming budgetary issues as 'a hellest of hells', schooling was under funded partly because it was unremunerative, unlike railways and irrigation canals which repaid principal and interest on capital costs.[33] Long before the revolt, James Mill had argued unsuccessfully that reform in land tenure and assessment would be ineffective in stimulating agrarian progress unless accompanied by considerable advances in rural education.[34] British policy was not sufficiently vigorous to improve significantly a vernacular educational system which the Bombay education official, T. B. Jervis, in 1824 defined as 'of the humblest description', never completely recovered from the 'infamy' of Aurangzeb's reign.[35] Perhaps most important, the first half of the century was notable for the stagnation and crumbling of Indian primary education, not its advancement by a reformist British raj. Western educators scorned

[29] *Ibid*.

[30] R. V. Parulekar (ed.), *Survey of Indigeneous Education in the Province of Bombay*, second ed. (Bombay, 1951), xxi; *Fifth Annual Report, Bombay Education Society*, 1819, 11; *Sixth Annual Report, BES*, 1821, 21.

[31] 'Extract from Bombay Secretariat Records', I of 1825, J. A. R. Stevenson to St. John Thackeray, in Parulekar, 144.

[32] Parulekar, xxxi, xlvii, and *passim*.

[33] India Office Library, Lytton Papers, Lytton to Cranbrook, Jan. 13, 1879.

[34] *Parliamentary Papers*, 1831, V, 65–320 A, 324.

[35] 'Secretariat Records', LVIII of 1824, Letter from T. B. Jervis, Sept. 18, 1824, in Parulekar, 4–5.

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vernacular grade schools as 'contemptible', and 'wretched' and 'worthless', and were content to let them 'die out', but provided no viable alternative.[36] By mid-nineteenth century, a purported Golden Age of British reformism had produced a limited number of elegant, eloquent, Western-educated Indians and a national literacy rate of under 5%.

Extremely important, considering the power of jurisprudence in shaping and sustaining a civilization, the British left untouched 'the vast arena of Hindu and Muslim, law.'[37] In one of their most significant and least comprehended actions, they incorporated into Anglo-Indian law the *Dharmasastras*, those monumental commentaries on classical Sanskritic law which supported village institutions, caste relations, and regulated thoroughly the behavior of the Indian populace at virtually all levels. Then, underscoring the policy, they gave the sanction of Anglo-Indian law to all local customs, so long as they were coherent, prevalent and did not contradict British legislation and jurisprudence. British social caution was comprehensible as expressed in their legal policies, but they apparently did not recognize fully the implications for endeavors quickly to transform Indian civilization. Thereafter, it would have been difficult for Western governance rapidly to have circumvented the implications of juridical rules that strengthened the bastions of indigenous culture and of established village institutions. By legitimizing classical and customary Indian law, British rule was ratifying precepts of human behavior or codes of conduct which this jurisprudence enunciated. Dharmasastras and customary law dictated the minutiae of Indian behavior in virtually all spheres. They prescribed the duties and prerogatives of family, lineage, and caste. These included the rituals of penance for caste infractions, the powers and responsibilities of village leaders, the obligations of clients to patrons, the rank and prerogatives of particular castes. They defined appropriate social and financial behavior, food, and dress, as specifically as the correct attitude toward inferior castes, Brahmans, land, sons, widows, animals and all else, such as the costumes and adornments to be worn by widows, the portion of food allotted to them, their spiritual condition, their role in society.[38] By accepting the authority of most Indian juris-

[36] 'Secretariat Records', LVIII of 1824, No. 1 of General Department, in Parulekar, 68; Bhagwan Dayal, *Development of Modern Indian Education* (Bombay, 1955), 112.
[37] Stokes, 264.
[38] Pandurang Kane, *History of Dharmasastra* (Poona, 1941), II, 104–78, 550–632, III, 596–692; Arthur Steele, *The Law and Custom of Hindoo Castes* (London, 1868), 122–214.

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prudence, a body of law that was omnipresent and precise in prescribing the minutiae of caste and personal behavior, British rule provided a formidable mainstay for the continuity of existing institutions and conduct, which it remained illicit to breech. Theories espoused by Philosophical Radicals on law and social transformation were counterbalanced by pragmatic British governance; the parameters of Anglo-Indian law—set before the Mutiny—conserved indigenous culture more than they transmogrified Indian society.

British development policies provoke questions about their methods, not addressed fully by theoreticians of colonial 'modernization', whether 'orthodox liberal' thinkers, who anticipated a benign evolution toward 'modernity' by emulating Western practices, or critics who perceived Western 'modernizing' as degrading colonization. British reformers had adopted a positivist, technological approach to stimulating progress in India by selective intervention, through individual property rights, new commercial laws and trade policies to achieve material growth; and they anticipated transmitting Western social practices and knowledge of technological and material innovations to the populace through the vessel of English-educated Indian elites. A key precept was quite doubtful: that material and technological development rapidly altered social relations and cultural practices. In reality, technological and material development required cultural receptivity, as recognized in recent studies; George Basalla, for example, emphasized the importance of 'psychological' and 'social and cultural' influences on the adoption and direction of technological innovations.[39] Material growth was technology-dependent; and Merritt Smith, Peter Perdue, Richard Bulliet and others represented persuasively that the adoption of technology required 'an appropriate social environment'.[40] Fernand Braudel wrote of a frequent social 'ceiling' on implementing new technology, and Bulliet observed 'impermeable social filters', barring quick technological change because 'social boundaries' separated communities and classes, a perception intrinsically questioning British notions of disseminating knowledge through Indian elites to ordinary or low castes or across religious and ethnic divides.[41]

[39] George Basalla, *The Evolution of Technology* (Cambridge, 1988), 65–101, 169–205.

[40] P. C. Perdue, 'Technological Determinism in Agrarian Societies', 177, Richard Buillet, 'Technological Determinism in Pre-Industrial Societies', 204–9, in Merritt Smith and Leo Marx, (eds)., *Does Technology Drive History?* (Cambridge, Mass.), 1994.

[41] Fernand Braudel, *Capitalism and Material Life 1400–1800* (Paris, 1967), 245–6; Buillet, 205–8.

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Cultural receptivity influenced technological and material innovation, but how far did 'culture' extend beyond material life and intercourse? Clifford Geertz postulated culture as partly 'hard facts' of existence—who controlled 'production . . . guns . . . dossiers . . . newspapers', and 'soft facts'—notions of purpose in 'human life', grounds of 'belief . . . punishment . . . hope', or influences on 'might, desire, calculation and interest'; and he defined 'art, ideology, law, religion . . . even . . . ethics and epistemology' as valid 'genres of cultural expression'.[42] Since culture influenced material growth, then accepting Geertz's view indicated that development required affecting the 'soft' components of existence, for example through laws and education aimed comprehensively at upgrading mass knowledge, which British policies slighted in India. British inattention to direct advancement better explained the absence of 'decisive social change' in India than analyses of 'the development of underdevelopment' or of degrading imperial cultural intrusion.

The cultural component of development was stressed by prominent economic historians, including R. M. Hartwell and David Landes, and authorities on contemporary economic development, such as W. A. Lewis, Ragnar Nurkse and John Mellor, who commented on the importance to material growth and human progress of investment in 'social capital' and 'social infrastructure', notably popular education and law reform, to give the masses knowledge and social freedom for grass-roots innovation.[43] P. E. Bondzi-Simpson, a sociologist of the law, emphasized the significance of the legal system in facilitating 'mechanisms' for 'development' and in providing 'rights, obligations and entitlements' that promoted innovation and enterprise.[44] The record for India shows that before 1857 British reformers were bearish on investing in 'human capital'. If the revolt had any effect in redeploying assets, it was to create a slightly more bullish trend, at least in fulfilling promises of investing in higher education and legal reform, whose pace was speeded after 1857. Nonetheless, British caution regarding social reform, on direct

[42] Clifford Geertz, *After the Fact* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), 43; Geertz, 'Common Sense as a Cultural System', *Antioch Review*, L (1992), 221–41.

[43] R. M. Hartwell, *The Industrial Revolution and Economic Growth* (London, 1971), 226–61; David Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus* (Cambridge, 1969), 334–44; W. A. Lewis, *The Theory of Economic Growth* (Homewood, 1955), 164–200; John Mellor, *The Economics of Agricultural Development* (Ithaca, 1966), 133–5, 152–7.

[44] P. E. Bondzi-Simpson, 'Confronting the Dilemmas of Development through Law', 7, in P. E. Bondzi-Simpson (ed.), *The Law and Economic Development in the Third World* (New York, 1992).

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expenditures on human skills, knowledge and uplift, and, alternately, their embrace of a 'vast' domain of classical Indian law and legal custom shored up much of old India, limited grass roots innovation in economic development, and hindered social transformation. Notwithstanding what may be theorized about benign, degrading or inconsistent Western policies of modernization, clearly in practice the absence of comprehensive programs for popular uplift restricted human progress before 1857 and beyond.

Revolt and Reform Policies

Contrary to some impressions, the 'Mutiny' of 1857 strengthened British resolve to achieve progress and improve the human condition in India through policies of economic development and by diffusing Western education among an indigenous elite. The Indian revolt sparked controversy in Westminster and Whitehall about what instigated the furious rising, whether new measures should prevail, and if Parliament should dissolve all remnants of Company rule.[45] Throughout reform and modernization were omnipresent as the critical, dynamic issues. Immediately after revolt, Liberal leaders in the Commons justified British dominion by defining modernization as the hope for India's social transformation.[46] They criticized Company

[45] The interpretation was important that once 'state breakdown had begun', the outcome of revolt depended on mobilization of state, populace and distinct ideologies; but British success in silencing Indian rebels' ideological voice meant that influential discussion about the significance of revolt occurred mainly in London. See Jack Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley, 1991), 461–3.

[46] Liberal British views generally were affirmed by Indian intellectuals that revolt didn't reflect discontent with modernizing reforms. The *Hindoo Patriot* termed the uprising a 'general rebellion', and other Indian periodicals expressed grievances about excessive salaries of British administrators, the so-called drain of wealth from India, and inferior educational and occupational opportunities for Indians. But the burden of the *Hindoo Patriot*'s message was to portray conflict between modernizing, progressive Western rule and 'Asiatic stationaryism'. The leaders of the revolt were demeaned as self-interested traditionalists, bent on destroying a half-century's progress. The Hindu pamphleteer who condemned Indians' limited administrative opportunities under Western rule, nonetheless insisted that older provinces and Punjab fundamentally were loyal to the British, and derided as preposterous that the Mutiny resulted from modernizing reforms: he blamed the rising on a narrow military caste. Westernized Indians by definition had been acculturated to a European intellectual outlook; their concepts of society and reform were influenced by liberal English models. Western-educated Indian intellectuals even more than English Liberals needed to use history to protect their interests. Liberal claims in

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rule as 'an abomination', an incubus on progress, which promoted revolt. The Company provided 'neither security of person or property and poverty was universal', a mock order was maintained by a ragamuffin police 'leagued with thieves', and 'vastly superior' Indians were excluded from office and naturally sought 'revenge'.[47] Alternately, Tories condemned heedless modernization as provoking Indian conflagration, and portrayed the Company as guardian against darker, selfish English material interests in India.[48] By the mid-1850s only the most arcane imaginings could construe the Company as dominating British policy-making. Rather these ideas were related to the making of myth, to support or oppose Westernization and policies for rapid economic growth and social change in India.

The Tory concept that the Mutiny represented an extensive and complex Indian discontent may have reflected partly that English conservatism accepted more fully variety and intricacy as normal for history and society, but there was a long-established Conservative skepticism regarding Utilitarian and other prescriptions for 'sudden and miraculous changes in the progress of human society', or the 'rapid improvement of the Hindoos'.[49] The views of Benjamin Disraeli, the leading Tory spokesman, guided a broad Conservative counter-proposal to reconstruct British rule by strengthening the traditional Indian social order. Precisely because he attempted to rescind modernizing policies, Disraeli developed the theory that Mutiny expressed widespread social discontent, induced by liberal British reforms. Disraeli considered that respect for the military power controlled by socially conservative territorial aristocrats was fundamental to India's peaceful governance. He castigated the previous Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, and Liberal reformers for attempting a rapid, ill-conceived transformation of Indian institutions, and he characterized the mutinous Bengal soldiery not as avengers of professional grievances but as 'the exponents of general discontent'. The Mutiny had been caused by the 'new system of Indian policy' instituted by Dalhousie in 1848, one which imposed British

England that the Mutiny was a military rebellion and expressed Indian barbarism were met generally by a vast silence in India—except for protestations of loyalty. See, for example, *Hindoo Patriot*, May 21, 1857 and July 9, 1857; An Anonymous Hindoo, *The Mutinies, the Government and the People* (Calcutta, 1858), 10–11, 39–41; *The Thoughts of a Native of Northern India* (London, 1858), 10–14, 21–8.

[47] Malcolm Lewin, *The Way to Lose India* (London, 1857), 10–11; see also. A Retired Bengal Civilian, *A Glance at the East* (London, 1857), *passim*.

[48] Henry Parker, *The Empire of the Middle Classes* (London, 1858), *passim*.

[49] Stokes, 23–4.

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law and commerce at the expense of Indian interests and sensitivities, and culminated in the annexation of Oudh, alienating Muslim princes who 'for the first time . . . felt that they had identity of interests with the Hindoo rajahs'.[50] British land policies, *inam* commissions and adoption laws, according to Disraeli, created a social and economic revolution which wiped out princely dynasties, *jaghirdars, zemindars, taluqdars* and other great feudatories at 'an enormous rate', while rigorous inheritance laws and Christianizing policies 'amazingly disturbed the religious mind of Hindoostan'.[51] Dalhousie's modernizing policies, then, had severely shaken the traditional, hierarchical social and economic structure of India, and from these disturbances were generated violent and widespread attacks on British rule in 1857.[52]

By contrast, Liberals usually pronounced that the major failure of British policy was insufficiently rapid, feeble modernization and reform.[53] At the heart of Liberal theory for transmogrifying India were concepts from the Manchester school of economics, and conviction that applying these principles would enrich India's material life and dissolve Hindu social traditionalism. Development of a modern economy would break the strangle-hold of rigidifying institutions, of caste and custom on Indian society. Effectively promoting Liberal policies of economic modernization as key to social transformation was *The Economist*. Characterizing Dalhousie's modernizing policy as beneficent, the influential periodical asked for what better purpose the British held India than 'its gradual enlightenment and the judicious amelioration of the native character, institutions and customs'? The fundamental Indian social organization, caste, was condemned as an 'irrational institution', which forced numerous Indians for religious and social reasons to forego 'many of the most profitable employments'. The impact of English economic enterprise, however,

[50] Hansard's *Parliamentary Debates*, CXLVII (1858), cols 444, 449, 465.

[51] *Ibid*., cols 461–64.

[52] India Office Library, Wood Papers, Canning to Wood, Feb. 27, 1860 and June 13, 1860.

[53] Modernizers like John Strachey and Richard Temple anticipated that development policies vigorously pursued would leave the old India in wreckage, and thought the hostility of its feudatory leaders was inevitable. They believed that the more quickly was created the new India of social mobility, Westernized intellectuals, enriched merchants and prosperous peasant proprietors, the more rapidly would fade in importance a declining breed of discontented *rajahs*, jaghirdars, and zemindars. See, for example, Strachey's views in *Selections from the Records of the Government of India*, Home Department, CLX, 'Correspondence Regarding the Law of Land Sale', 55–9.

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enabled artisans to rise to master craftsmen, small shopkeepers to become landed gentry, and, in general, was beginning that circulation of classes through which 'the whole frame of society' was 'periodically renewed', forcing sacred and stagnant social patterns to be abandoned.[54] The Liberals, then, claimed to advance an economic method for social transformation that didn't require frontal attack on Indian religious and social customs.[55]

Brought to the forefront by Indian revolt were questions of how the British should rule and why.[56] The scheme Lord Palmerston introduced to the Commons in 1858 for the transfer of governance from Company to Crown stressed themes of modernization and progress. Citing 'scenes of barbarity in India' during the Mutiny, Palmerston queried:

> If during the century for which we have exercised power in India, we had used that power to enlighten and civilize the people, do you think their nature would not, in some measure at least, have been changed and that the atrocious crimes which they have committed would not have been as repugnant to their feelings as they are to those of the people of this country?[57]

Palmerston characterized the Company as, after 1833, a 'phantom', Indian administration as most 'cumbrous' and the Directors as 'totally ignorant of . . . Indian interests'.[58] The argument for modernization was put forth most succinctly by Robert Slaney, a Liberal of Shrewsbury, author of a tract on economic improvement, an *Essay on the Employment of the Poor*.[59] He claimed that in Indian land assessment policies, often three-quarters of gross produce was taken, leaving the 'wretched cultivator' a 'paltry pittance on which to live'. Slaney then asked:

[54] *The Economist*, XV, 1231 (Nov. 7, 1857).

[55] The pervasive optimism regarding the improvement of India can be traced through the House of Commons speeches cited below, in the citations in notes 65–66 in this essay, in such pamphlets as *Be Just to India, Prevent Famine and Cherish Commerce* (Manchester, 1861), *passim*, and in *The Economist*, XV, 837–39 (Aug. 1, 1857), 896 (Aug. 15, 1857), 977 (Sept. 15, 1857), 1033 (Sept. 19, 1857), 1230–31 (Nov. 7, 1857), 1318 (Nov. 28, 1857).

[56] An earlier obstacle to direct British governance was concern about increased crown patronage and power, but by 1858 suffrage reform had increased confidence in Parliament's control. See, for example, G. P. Gooch (ed.), *The Later Correspondence of Lord John Russell* (London, 1925), II, 226–7.

[57] *Debates*, CXLVIII, col. 1282.

[58] *Ibid*., col. 1381.

[59] Robert Slaney, *Essay on the Employment of the Poor* (London, 1819).

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What had the Company done in return . . .? For want of works of irrigation whole populations were periodically decimated by famine. Canals, railways, and other improvements had . . . been tardily set on foot. There were only 400 miles of railways completed . . . There were no two countries in the world which . . . could be of more service to each other . . . India blessed with a fertile soil and rich in tropical productions, could supply us with cotton, tea, silk, sugar, indigo, rice and various other articles of which we stood peculiarly in need, while . . . if her resources were properly developed she would be able to take quantities of our manufactures in exchange.[60]

By setting Indian discontent in context of Company rule and by stressing that major economic reforms hadn't been implemented, Slaney and other Liberals agitated for more improvement without blaming Indian discontent on Dalhousie's modernizing policies.

Liberal ideas prevailed of achieving progress and stability in India especially through economic development and social transformation, even under Conservative regimes. When the Conservative ministry of Lord Derby took office in the middle of 1858 the new government found it impossible to resist the dominating trends in England for change in India. Notably, as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Conservative Leader in Commons, Disraeli's policies reversed his rhetoric as an opposition spokesman. He attempted to pilot into law a reform bill, mainly drafted by Lord Ellenborough, a former Indian Governor General, which emphasized economic improvement. The Conservatives would have institutionalized the political intervention in Indian affairs of English manufacturing interests most bent on modernizing India by Manchester theorems. Disraeli's proposals were similar to Palmerston's except that he planned a governing role for 'the great [English] industrial interests' on an enlarged Council of India; it would include five members elected 'by the principal seats of trade and industry' in the British Isles: London, Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow and Belfast, who were most 'interested . . . in the development of Indian resources'.[61] Disraeli implicitly gave primacy of place to economic development in his comment on the potential for Anglo-Indian economic exchange, that 'India sends us no manufactures but ought to send us all the raw produce we require'.[62] The new government of India, then, was to work toward developing

[60] *Debates*, CXLVIII, cols 1425–26.
[61] *Debates*, CXLIX, col. 826.
[62] *Ibid*.

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the Indian economy as a producer of primary materials, essentially the same view held by Manchester, stripped of homilies about social transformation. The Conservatives obtained the support of the anti-Palmerston Liberals, led by Lord Russell, and put through a modified Government of India Act, in which the Council numbered fifteen, and a Secretary of State for India was to be appointed with powers to overrule the Council except for appropriations and certain other financial matters.[63] The idea was abandoned of electing representatives from 'the principal seats of [English] trade and industry', condemned by J. A. Roebuck as a 'great sham' to win British business support, and by the *Manchester Guardian* as 'claptrap and delusion'.[64] English industry had other, ample sources of influence in Whitehall. That Conservatives like Disraeli were driven by political realities into active support for India's economic development indicates the strength of material progress as ethos for British rule. The issue of India's governance provided British statesmen opportunity to reconstruct views about imperial purpose, which they reformulated primarily as economic development and its potential for social change.

Western dominion in late nineteenth-century India was perhaps never more actively, optimistically involved in India's improvement than in the decade following the Mutiny. The government constructed and commissioned railways and roads, canals, universities, and other public works, disseminated small loans to agriculturalists for seed, contrived improved wheat threshing machinery, distributed funds for the upkeep of irrigation and in a multitude of other ways attempted actively to implement the Free Trade idea of development through increased agricultural production and international commerce.[65] New universities graduated thousands annually and promoted Western professional occupations. Little could have more startled British political leaders of the post-Mutiny era than knowledge that intensified policies of development and progress would go awry.

A crucial struggle developed, however, concerning whether improvement strictly should follow Manchester economic ideas,

[63] W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli* (rev. ed., reissued, N.Y. 1968), 527–32; A. B. Keith, *A Constitutional History of India, 1600–1935* (2d. ed. rev., London, 1937), 165. See R. F. Dod, *The Parliamentary Companion* (London, 1858), 134–312, for party affiliations.

[64] *Debates*, CXLIX, col. 843; *The Manchester Guardian*, March 30, 1858, 2.

[65] See, for example, *General Report of the Bombay Administration* (Bombay, 1872), 154; 1878, 175; 1879, 185–6; 1882, 152; 1884, 94; 1886, 79.

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stressing international trade, or a more sociologically-oriented method, more responsive to India's distinctive social characteristics. Dispute over India's development pitted a leading English theoretician of economic growth, James Wilson, against some of the colony's provincial governors, Council members and a future Viceroy, John Lawrence. A chief proponent of the Manchester school of development, Wilson was appointed Finance Member of the Governor General's Council after Palmerston's return to office in 1859. Founder and editor of *The Economist*, and a major spokesman for the new economics in England, Wilson arrived in India with a broad mandate for financial reform from the Secretary of State, Sir Charles Wood, and intended to impose 'the complete revolution both in principle and practice' of economic policy wrought in England in the previous two decades.[66] Wilson's program called for immediately abating many customs duties; the price of freer trade was new domestic taxation, most importantly an income tax which Wilson thought next best to no taxation.[67] Experienced Indianists understood the dangers to India of free market policies, and 'a great many people' on the India Office Council feared that Wilson had been 'run away with by his English notions and the support of the English people at Calcutta', but they lacked any alternate theories to challenge English economic doctrines.[68] They pleaded for 'judicious economy' and the 'gradual development of the resources of the country' in place of a headlong rush toward improvement by European methods.[69] They could not convince Whitehall, however, that Indian finances might be salvaged rapidly without fresh taxation and by only slowly applying English modernizing ideas. When Charles Trevelyan threw the issue into the political arena and tried rallying the Indian bureaucracy against Wilson, Wood dismissed him as Governor of Madras.[70] The ethos of Free Trade economic development triumphed against the qualms of Old India Hands about plunging ahead with English-oriented methods of development when the Mutiny barely was quashed.

[66] E. I. Barrington, *The Servant of All, Pages from the Family, Social and Political Life of My Father* (London, 1927), II, 182; Wood Papers, Wood to Wilson, Nov. 3, 1859.

[67] Barrington, II, 53–4; James Wilson, *The Revenue, or What the Chancellor Should Do* (London, 1827), 18–27.

[68] Wood Papers, Wood to Canning, May 10, 1860.

[69] *Parliamentary Papers*, 1860, XLIX, 481, 4–8.

[70] Wood Papers, Canning to Wood, April 19, 1860, and Wood to Trevelyan, May 17, 1860; see also *Parliamentary Papers*, 1860, XLIX, 481, 32, 86.

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The continued rush toward economic modernization sustained and intensified emphasis on development in post-Mutiny policies. Some of Wilson's specific reforms were abandoned as financial crisis was resolved; nonetheless, Free Trade development burgeoned. Ironically, within a few years his income tax was scrapped, his currency proposals were shelved and his arch opponent Trevelyan was returned to India in Wilson's former position of government Finance Member. These were pyrrhic victories for Old India Hands. Free Trade development held sway. Trevelyan, Canning's successor Lord Lawrence, and others complained in later years that the pressure from Whitehall and Lancashire for English-oriented economic changes had become increasingly fierce and successful in the 1860s. The Lancashire cotton famine particularly caused a great speculative boom in Bombay and Bengal, and an accompanying swell in railway, port and similar development projects. Greedy English 'monied and mercantile interests' induced Whitehall in the 1860s to adopt economic projects which many Indianists considered worthless.[71] Free Trade develoment was secular British policy, however, not a transient result of English profiteering from temporary market conditions. Manchester manufacturers and the Anglo-Indian press ridiculed the idea that 'the ground scratched with a crooked stick, drawn by Bengalee bullocks ... [guided by cultivators] ignorant of manure and drainage is unsusceptible of improvement by the application of European science and mechanical skill'.[72] English technical experts frequently agreed. Britain's leading authority on Indian cotton experimentation remained tenaciously convinced, despite multiple failures, that long stapled Egyptian or American cotton could be grown successfully in India by peasant cultivators.[73] Nor was idealizing Free Trade development limited to doctrinaire supporters of Manchester's creed. The Chairman of the India Reform Society, John Dickenson, for example, feared that Indian interests were sacrificed to the 'English railway clique' and to 'vultures from the City' of London, but claimed that anachronistic government attitudes hampered developing trade, the influx of European capital and rapid Indian economic growth.[74]

[71] India Office Library, *Parliamentary Branch Collection*, no. 179, 'Select Committee on East India Finance' (1873), 464–5, 483.

[72] *Extract from the Proceedings of the Committee on Trade and Agriculture of the Royal Asiatic Society Relative to the Supply of Cotton From India* (London, 1862), 24.

[73] *Extract*, 3–4; see also Robert Wright, *Notes on Cotton Farming, and Explanation of the American and East Indian Method* (London, 1862), 4 and *passim*.

[74] John Dickenson, *Address to the Members of the House of Commons on the Relations Between the Cotton Crisis and Public Works in India* (London, 1862), 4–7, 12, 20–3.

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British policies continued to seek agrarian progress through individual property rights and competition, and the spread of capitalist, export agriculture, and they upheld through most of India peasant land tenures. Misimpressions sometimes emerged that there was a significant shift in agrarian policies because revolt caused concern about the political effects of alienating land from great hereditary families, and because of Lord Canning's *talukdari* settlement in Oudh. When he was Secretary for India, Lord Stanley wrote that 'nothing is calculated to impair the good will of the great and influential proprietary body . . . than the direct and constant action of Government institutions in depriving them of ancient possessions'.[75] Canning shared this attitude completely; writing about Punjab, he warned that British policy was:

> creating an unprofitable and dangerous class—an idle aristocracy without occupation or recognized power but not without indirect influence . . . Unless the chiefs can obtain a real, substantial status which shall give them more to think of than debaucheries and extravagances . . . the result will be [that] if by foreign war or internal convulsion the Sikhs be aroused against us, as lately the Hindoostanies have been, we shall find ourselves in the Punjab as in Hindustan, without friends among our own subjects willing to side with us. Surely it is against all reason to attempt to govern a conquered country in which under all changes of dynasty feudalism has remained rooted, by obliterating its aristocracy or by maintaining that class shorn of all authority . . . We have improved the condition of the middle and lower classes—especially that of the merchants and the village communities—incalculably . . . But we have lowered the position of their natural superiors far more than is prudent. . . .[76]

Although Canning was able to obtain after the Revolt a taluqdari settlement in Oudh, which favored large holders, it had prevailed there before the Mutiny, and this provision for Oudh didn't imply abandoning the ethos of agrarian development, free market agricultural individualism and ryotwari settlements in India. More significant was what Canning could not achieve: special support for indebted talukdari and zemindari estates, a curb on agrarian commercialism or on foreclosure for debts, or a permanent land revenue.

The issue of land tenure wasn't as crucial for post-Mutiny agrarian modernization as unrestricted, individual title, capital markets and progressive assessments. Even if tenure had been central, in pre-Mutiny India estates were being alienated primarily in older British provinces, not in Oudh. Retaining taluqdari landholding in Oudh

[75] India, *Selections*, CLX, p. 2.
[76] Wood Papers, Canning to Wood, Feb. 27, 1860.

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after 1857 didn't change British tenures elsewhere on the subcontinent or slow the alienation of land.[77] For most India, after the Mutiny virtually nothing was done to revise land holding, retrieve alienated estates or otherwise raise the sunken fortunes of once great feudatory families. Rather, as Canning and Stanley noted, British policy resulted in 'transferring property from old hereditary families to whom the tenantry were attached to the mercantile classes, whom . . . they regard with dislike'.[78] In the late nineteenth century, the merchants or banyas expanded land holdings most dramatically, especially in the north, driving out many among that failing old warrior elite, the Rajputs. Merchants, Indian civil servants who were experts at the wily manipulation of British land laws, moneylenders and only occasionally wealthy peasants were the immediate displacers of old estate holders. The same displacement affected the ryots, who under a British system of commercial agriculture and land law by mid-century frequently were deep in the thralldom of debt to moneylenders and were being transformed in many places from peasant owners to tenants and agrarian laborers.[79]

The test of post-Mutiny land policy centred particularly on whether meaningful new measures would restrain free transfer of title deeds to check the rapid expansion of commercial interests' land control. Curbing unrestrained agrarian commercialism was advocated ardently by Stanley and Canning, but met overwhelming opposition. Leading provincial administrators such as Sir George Edmunstone, Lt. Governor of the Northwest Provinces, John Strachey, the influential Collector of Moradabad, and many others were convinced that prohibiting sale of land for monetary decrees would devastate agrarian improvement. Capital would be expended on personal gratification, agricultural enterprise would not pass beyond 'traditional bounds' and there would be 'no improvement, no progress'.[80] Whatever were the sins and cruelties of the moneylenders, they were producing a flow of capital to the land, and were speeding that circulation of classes *The Economist* had eulogized as the ideal method for breaking the dominance of a stagnant socio-religious out-

[77] See Jagdesh Raj, *The Mutiny and British Land Policy in North India, 1856–68* (Bombay, 1965), 18–19. As Dr. Raj has shown, despite pre-Mutiny antipathy of the British to *taluqdari* tenure, some 13,640 villages were settled according to it, and only 9,903 villages had other tenure systems.

[78] India, *Selections*, CLX, p. 1.

[79] Bombay, *Selections*, n.s., no. 166, p. 9.

[80] India, *Selections*, CLX, p. 25.

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look and hereditarily assigned hierarchy in India. Similarly, British administrators generally opposed Canning's plan for stabilizing land holding through a permanent restriction of the land revenue. They defended periodic, variable assessments as 'the first attempt . . . to apply to cultivation a method of extending and improving it'.[81] Further, 'if income from the land' was 'stationary . . . recourse must be had to increased taxation' from other sources, threatening Free Trade.[82] For these reasons, Canning obtained in the Code of 1859 only the weakest of measures, allowing some court management of beleaguered, over-mortgaged estates instead of creditors wielding the auction hammer on great, indebted properties; even this minor reform remained 'practically inoperative'.[83] In the decades following revolt, Western policies of promoting commercial agriculture were strengthened, as provincial governments established model farms and conducted numerous detailed experiments to improve seeds, tools, livestock, yields and specialized farming such as dairying.

Western Reforms and Human Advancement

The colonial regime's endeavors to 'transform' India through material development gained momentum after 1857. So, too, did initiatives for 'diffusing' English education, revising criminal laws and legal procedures, awarding Indians high civil service posts and voting rights, creating modern water supplies and improved sanitation in large cities, completing a geological survey of the sub-continent's mineral resources, and training some mid-wives to provide antiseptic child births. John Bull was peripatetic on several fronts in activities refuting characteristics of conservative or 'night watchman' rule. British reformers subscribed to a view of progress which was 'positivist', and 'Westcentric', and focused on the 'paradigm' of 'evolutionary, materialistic growth'.[84] Simultaneously, the British raj heeded staunchly Bentham's edict not to tread directly upon indigenous 'customs'. This British mode of progress yielded economic growth, fav-

[81] Wood Papers, Canning to Wood, Feb. 27, 1860; 100. R. C. Dutt, *Famines and Land Assessment in India* (London, 1900), 175.
[82] *Ibid*., 173.
[83] India, *Selections*, CLX, pp. III, 141–7, 172–3.
[84] B. L. Billet, *Modernization Theory and Economic Development* (Westport, 1993) 4; Thomas Pantham, *Political Theories and Social Reconstruction* (London, 1995), 34, 74–5, 82–93.

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ored especially those who learned 'Westernism', but induced many disruptions and even 'death by development'. Industrialization proceeded creditably, agriculture lagged badly, Indians from high and commercial castes or from business-minded 'migrant' communities were far in the forefront in obtaining Western education, occupations, and the benefits of development. Most ordinary Indians, however, remained illiterate, oriented by Sanskritic, Islamic and other 'Asian' cultures, didn't know Westernism, didn't improve significantly their living standards, and millions lost lives from epidemics stimulated inadvertently by economic and environmental disruptions of development programs.

Underlying disappointing results for the populace of development policies was the limited British attention given to the social and environmental basis of economic growth, particularly inadequate Western efforts to affect the 'social infrastructure', as illustrated in legal, educational and health programs. Rapid economic growth, social change and human 'improvement' required 'a revolution of ideas and values' and material and 'cultural' actions, including attention to 'social capital' and 'educational and institutional' support and new opportunities and 'attitudes toward . . . innovations'.[85] Or, it mandated intense attention to 'human infrastructure', through law, education, civil liberties. Education has been deemed so 'special' to economic growth that 'virtually all aspects of agricultural development' hinged on creating a 'broad range of educational institutions'.[86] Law was recognized as an important 'instrument of development', especially when it established a 'political framework' that stimulated enterprise and technological innovation.[87] Critical was providing empowerment, technical skills, knowledge and opportunity for ordinary multitudes to compete effectively for the rewards of development.

A cardinal British assumption that 'backward' Indian institutions and practices would rapidly succumb to the powerful, indirect effects of material reforms was a fateful miscalculation. Representing their own form of progress and utility, these institutions were ensconced in classical and customary law, and had significant influence. Manu

[85] Hartwell, 140, 149, 226–61; Lewis, 164–200; Landes, 334–44; Mellor, 133–5, 155–7, 229, 240; Ragnar Nurkse, *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries* (N.Y., 1967), 26, 47, 143, 257; John Kunkel, *Society and Economic Growth* (London, 1970), 62–101.

[86] Mellor, 236.

[87] Bondzi-Simpson, 'Dilemmas', in Bonzi-Simpson (ed.), 4–5.

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and other lawgivers unabashedly had recommended that the 'code to regulate human conduct in accordance with the unalterable scheme of Creation' must be backed by psychological intimidation, and the 'occult', *karma*, and primal fears of the power of the universe were invoked to obtain conformity to an indigenous orientation which widely held sway.[88] 'Westernization' was readily feasible only for the minority who obtained Western learning.

Anglo-Indian law maintained its distinctive and inchoate combination of Westernizing and 'Sankritic' features. James Mill had been envisaged by Eric Stokes as seeking a 'revolution of Indian society' through 'the weapon of the law', an instrument of just governance, individual property rights, and new, rational law codes, but reformers achieved only 'the palest reflection' of Benthamite ambitions, many of their accomplishments occurring in the 1860s, in a manifestation of a sustained Westernizing legal revisionism. Following years of work, key legal reforms were enacted: the Penal Code of 1860, the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1861, the High Courts Act of 1861, the Succession Act of 1865, the Contract and Evidence Acts of 1872. Yet the limits of reformism continued to be defined by the juridical centrality of the *Dharmasastras*, customary and other autochthonous Indian legal statutes and practices.

Indigenous law as defined by the Dharmasastras and customary practice remained sufficiently powerful to influence, sometimes even dictate, the pace at which economic individualism replaced, or failed to supplant communal, hierarchical arrangements. Even in great commercial port cities, when progressive factions in local communities, such as the Kojas of Bombay, challenged customary, authoritarian control of community property, the courts upheld traditional Koja property management.[89] It was sanctioned by customary law and, therefore, by Anglo-Indian jurisprudence. Probably more important, the indigenous core of Anglo-Indian law supported the institutions and practices of village communities. For most Indians, there prevailed 'highly stratified', minutely organized village society, with 'ranked castes' and 'ranked' animals, vegetation and all other matter.[90] 'Caste inequalities' remained 'justified' by purported, innate human differences, Brahman supremacy merited by superior

[88] John Duncan Derrett, *Religion, Law and the State in India* (New York, 1968), 120.
[89] Christine Dobbin, *Urban Leadership in Western India* (London, 1972), 99–113.
[90] M. N. Srinivas, *The Remembered Village* (Berkeley, 1976), 167.

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abilities, the 'lowest castes' the most 'intellectually inferior'.[91] Distinctions in rights and the precise regulation of conduct weren't 'debased' superstition, however, but characterized India's ordered agricultural civilization.

Education was vital to India's 'modernization'; recent theories of economic growth, for example, correlated the education of 'trained personnel' with the 'rate of increase' of 'agricultural production' and industrial development.[92] Yet in no area of Western reformism were the disparities as great between the ideals of progress and the impact of policies. British reforms were true to Macaulay's vision of diffusing Western education—to only a few. In contrast to the colleges and universities which graduated elite thousands, state financial support for mass primary education into the twentieth century was insignificant. British policy continued to under-rate the importance of mass literacy and to under-fund it. Sir Charles Wood's 'famous despatch' of 1854 had declared it the 'sacred duty' of British rule to secure the 'general diffusion' through their teaching of 'useful and practical knowledge to every station'.[93] Wood's vision was 'pious hope', however, not state policy, a 'sacred duty' characterized by the sin of omission.[94] The main vehicle of British support for local primary schools until after World War I was financial subsidies; but the state required communities to provide two-thirds of total funds, which villages seldom raised. By 1910 G. K. Gokhale was requesting still 'a beginning . . . of making primary education free and compulsory', a start made only in the inter-war era and not implemented for the majority until after Independence.[95] The outlay on all primary education under British rule was less than on the Second Afghan War, fought to prevent the chimera of Czarist hordes sweeping through the Khyber, a military impossibility it was realized a few years later, since modern heavy weaponry couldn't cross the pass.

The Indians remained an overwhelmingly illiterate people through Western rule, and the great majority received no formal schooling. According to some calculations the British raj presided over virtually stagnant Indian literacy during a key century of 'revolutionary' Western reforms, under 5% in the mid-1830s and

[91] Kathleen Gough, *Rural Society in Southeast India* (Cambridge, 1981), 290.
[92] Mellor, 236; Hartwell, 243.
[93] Dayal, 104.
[94] Dayal, 96.
[95] Dayal, 118.

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in the late nineteenth century, and advancing little thereafter.[96] Among India's women 99% were illiterate in the early twentieth century, and an equal or higher proportion of all members of lower castes couldn't read or write—almost everyone. This was a disaster for any serious endeavor to achieve dynamic economic development, or for any transformation in the popular culture of health or fertility. Nor was a strong base being built for future progress by educating the younger generation, for among the minority obtaining formal education, more than 85% didn't reach the sixth grade.[97] British priorities in choosing guns over books were fatal to any prospect for rapid economic development or human advancement, stymying a progressive, competitive individualism which was vital to Western models of progress. Equally, creating a small minority of university-educated 'superior' Indians who were 'English' in 'taste . . . morals and intellect', while leaving the masses illiterate gave a definitive advantage to the few and disabled the many in individual struggles for the benefits of modernization. This was more true because Anglo-Indian law sustained the real differentials in opportunity of hierarchical village society.

Economic development occurred within the frame of India's hierarchical society, and established status and prosperity were prime indicators of comprehending Westernism, of successful entry to the modern sector, or achieving land control and rentier status. Development policies failed to achieve the vertical mobility and 'free circulation' of classes that were to reinvigorate Indian society and catalyze rapid economic growth and rising popular income. Instead the predominant pattern was horizontal mobility, crabwise, primarily by caste status, from superior standing in historic Indian civilization to prestigious, remunerative employment in the modern sector, or, alternately, from low or 'unclean' caste occupation to generally menial agricultural or town employment. This mobility did not maximize 'grass roots' modernization or lend itself to popular uplift. Entry into the modern sector or 'capitalist' land control were achieved through education and status, the Western education that taught efficient, Darwinistic competition in India's modernizing milieu, and the status, wealth and social

[96] Martin Carnoy, *Education as Cultural Imperialism* (New York, 1974), 108.
[97] William Haggerty, *Higher and Professional Education in India* (United States Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1969), 32.

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freedom to obtain the education. Brahmans, characteristically, had English male literacy fifty times Jats' acquisition of English learning, and up to several thousand times the English learning of menial castes and tribes. Commercial castes had a multiple in the north of ten times Jat English literacy and fifty times the English literacy of low castes.[98] Brahman entry into the secular professions was 12 times Rajput admission, 25 times Jats' and Kunbis', 1,000 times Scavengers' and 3,000 times Chamars' penetration into professional employment. More than half the Company directors in the United Provinces were from Brahman, Sheikh and Agarwal castes, and in South India the majority of Hindu factories belonged to Brahmans and members of commercial castes. By comparison, among South India's Madigas, 27% remained traditional leather workers, 66% were field hands but only one in 2,000 had become business managers and clerks, and one in 4,000 were professionals; across India similar figures prevailed among sweepers, scavengers, leather workers and others from lowly or 'unclean' castes of predominant occupation as agricultural laborers and minuscule entry into prestigious, well paid or 'modern' employments.[99]

British policies of economic development and social progress, then, had extremely diverse results, promoting trade, some economic growth and a degree of secular liberalism among the educated elite, but dubiously affecting the human condition. Western policies didn't bar the rise of modern Indian industry or boost significantly agricultural progress or popular well-being. Industrialization in the last colonial decades outpaced the global average—albeit starting from a low base, which bolstered the upward curve. Industrial development hardly was dynamic but neither did it illustrate 'an inability to adopt, imitate, or respond to European industrialization' due to Western capitalist domination. Alternately, British endeavors to hasten agrarian development through peasant tenures or by improving crops, tools and livestock were disappointing. Experiments to increase the output of commercially valuable crops were immensely—but almost uniquely—successful in multiplying the international sales of Indian tea. Generally, they were hindered by the monsoon's rigors, pests, poverty and other unpropitious circumstances. Harold Mann, Bombay Agricultural Director, commented that 'all the obvious methods of increasing production' by improving 'crops' or 'manuring'

[98] *Census of India*, 1911, I, Pt 2, 82–8.
[99] *CI*, 1911, I, Pt 2, 358–73, XII, Pt 2, 260–6.

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or 'seed' either 'failed or yielded only partial success', and 'local' methods proved 'the best'. Improvements were made 'at too great a cost' to be practical.[100] The British had not found technological or other keys to a more rapid tempo of agricultural growth, the dominant sector of the economy, employing 70% of the work force. Brahmans and *banyas* who became rentiers usually did not have farming expertise and were satisfied to obtain profits by extracting rents and goods from tenants and clients, disregarding agricultural improvement. Ordinary peasants often were too indebted, underfunded and unacquainted with more advanced modes of cultivation to serve as vanguard of higher yield agriculture.

Most important in assessing the human impact was that economic development didn't improve notably the lot of the illiterate, lowly-paid multitudes. While some calculations show modest increases in laborers' incomes, statistics from *Indian Wages and Prices, The Indian Labour Gazette* and other sources indicate a turbulent pattern in which due to volatile prices workers gained, lost, recouped and lost again real purchasing power, and after five difficult decades ending with World War II, the net result wasn't clearly positive.[101] A Royal Commission reported in 1932 that many industrial laborers suffered a 'tyranny of debt' which 'degraded' them, and that large numbers could not secure 'anything above ... subsistence'. These workers often existed in slums 'unequalled' in their 'overcrowding, congestion and squalor', locales which were 'a constant menace to health', and subject 'frequently' to 'epidemic disease'.[102] On the land, in the early twentieth century, dilatory agricultural expansion achieved only half the growth of population, male agricultural field hands doubled from a tenth to a fifth of cultivators, almost half of women cultivators were field hands, and in some provinces tenancy multiplied to 75% of all holdings.[103] The rise of tenancy and field hands illustrated sharply that the Western reformers' program of peasant proprietorship had been undermined.

Significantly, Western rule never coped successfully with the contrary demographic disruptions unleashed by 'development'. Among major, inadvertent consequences of British policies were social and

[100] *Annual Report of the Agricultural Department*, 1922–23, Bombay, 1.

[101] *Wages and Prices in India*, 1900, 17, 282, 284; 1921, 96–7, 150; *The Indian Labour Gazette*, III, No. 1, May 1946; 301; *Royal Commission on Labour in India* (London, 1932), III, Pt 1, 238.

[102] *Royal Commission on Labour in India*, 'Report', 226, 270, 272.

[103] Bombay, *Selections*, n.s., no. 635 (1929), 89, 93.

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environmental changes which helped provoke an era of 'crisis mortality' from the late nineteenth century. Subsequently, the government didn't initiate measures for moderating fertility to ease the pressures of escalating population growth in the last colonial decades. Health programs reached a minority only of the Indian populace, and influenced the core medical beliefs of only the Western-educated few. While some villagers sought treatments from Western dispensaries, almost none were taught the microbiological causations of illness, or its transmission by insect vectors, human contact and contaminated substances. Common health behavior wasn't changed to increase protection from infection. The richness of Indian therapies didn't provide a shield against the disease incursions accompanying environmental disruptions and other health risks frequently associated with 'development'. Life expectancy, already very low, sank 20% to twenty years in the five decades ending in 1920, as India was stricken with waves of highly fatal epidemics and greater mortality from endemic maladies.[104] When life-expectancy began to rise from the 1920s, initially mainly due to the increase of immune resistance, not better public health programs, fertility remained high. Colonial development policies didn't include any campaign for birth control. Indigenous cultures and fertility practices remained substantially intact, population pressure intensified and demographic expansion became a dire problem. These were dismal experiences, the diametric opposite of serious, earlier British beliefs that by transposing to India reforms responsible for 'great advances' in England, they could achieve the sub-continent's 'sudden progress', and its 'rapid transformation'.

Balanced assessment of deleterious facets of Western policies, then, appears to require abandoning simpler, straightforward notions of a 'draining' material exploitation that promoted the 'development of underdevelopment' or of a crippling imperial hegemony that displaced Indians from their culture or thwarted indigenous capitalism, or of an absence of reform initiatives after 1857, in contrast to an earlier vigor. While Indians had to forge modern manufacturing growth in a Free Trade environment, with little help from government, industrial growth was adequate by comparative, global measures, illustrating a steady 'development of development'. By late nineteenth century national taxes absorbed only six percent of income, but after the Revolt British policies were innovative in

[104] Kingsley Davis, *The Population of India and Pakistan* (Princeton, 1951), 36.

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many arenas, including creating representative political institutions, modern universities, and an impressive economic infrastructure. An unrestrained, environmentally unsound materialism, and imbalanced development prevailed, not 'night watchman' rule. Nor was there any sign in the most revealing of British sources, the private papers of leading statesmen, of a British endeavor to secure greater political control through more intense cultural penetration.[105] Rather, British officials in the practice of power frequently had opposite, more accurate views than did Antonio Gramsci about Western cultural indoctrination as a device to facilitate political control. Before mid-nineteenth century, Macaulay criticized those who would 'keep the people of India ignorant' to 'keep them submissive,' and held that British 'national honour' required that educated Indians obtain 'high place' even if the 'sceptre' of rule passed eventually from England.[106] His principles prevailed in policies in India of university education and entry of the educated into the high civil service—but only the few were educated. Westernism was concentrated in an English educated elite, for whom it was more empowering than culturally subjugating, facilitating hegemony over the benefits of development but calling forth the Gandhis, Nehrus, Aurobindo Ghoses, the gurus, pragmatists and firebrands of Indian nationalism. Conversely, the Indian multitudes followed a *kharma–dharma* life orientation, in innumerable ways retained the behavior and beliefs of the indigenous cultures which remained their heritage, and British modes of development didn't meld with these heritages and practices to significantly uplift the masses.[107]

Dynamic and benign economic growth and improvement in the human condition required development policies that influenced

[105] Dalhousie Papers, Scottish Record Office; Lawrence Papers, IOL; Northbrook Papers, IOL; Lytton Papers, IOL; Ripon Papers, British Library; Dufferin Papers, IOL; Elgin Papers, IOL; Curzon Papers, IOL; Wood Papers; Hamilton Papers, IOL; Morley Papers, IOL; Hardinge Papers, Cambridge University Library; Salisbury Papers, Public Record Office and Christ Church, Oxford University; Lansdowne Papers, PRO; Grey Papers, PRO; Joseph Chamberlain Papers, University of Birmingham Library; Rosebery Papers, National Library of Scotland; Balfour Papers, BL; Templewood Papers, CUL; Montague Papers, Bodlean, Oxford University.

[106] Macaulay, 'Speech on Government of India', July 1833, in Young, 718. Undoubtedly there sometimes was a cultural crisis among some in the cadre of Western-educated Indians, and occasionally a revulsion against Westernism. The cultural dilemma of a relatively small intellectual elite shouldn't be projected as the spiritual impoverishment of a nation dispossessed of its civilization.

[107] Oscar Lewis, *Village Life in Northern India* (Urbana, 1958), 197–301 and *passim*; Gough, 290, 295–6, 320, 322, 327, 337.

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every critical feature of the social condition to achieve coordinated change and minimize the potential disruptions of revolutionary transformation. As a foreign regime, the British naturally had cautions about direct social intrusion upon indigenous cultural beliefs and practices, but to attempt economic development and social transformation without a social program, and amidst the vigor, utility and tenacity of indigenous culture and social organization was a trap. Ensconcing the *Dharmasastras* in the midst of Anglo-Indian law closed the trap, because of the pertinacity of endemic beliefs and behavior and their power to frustrate British development policies and reforms. And the illiteracy of the masses left no means to open the trap, to encourage the ordinary populace to participate in 'grass roots' development, obtain the benefits of economic growth or protect themselves from environmental decay and the spread of disease microbes and vectors associated with development. The failings of the British regime were experienced less in economic exploitation or cultural subjugation than in the heavy burden of light outlays on 'social capital', in a reform program which left the ordinary populace outside the 'modern' sector, undernourished popular education, technological training, public health programs, environmental rehabilitation, birth control. Macaulay was eloquent in eulogizing the 'glory' of uplifting a 'great people', but British policies of progress were insufficient and were locked in too contradictory a relationship with pertinacious Indian institutions to accomplish their objectives before the 'sceptre' of rule passed to Indians, and British methods failed to avoid serious disruptions of modernization, common in the clash between Western power and Asian civilizations.[108]

[108] Macaulay, 'Government of India', 718.

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