Evolution Of Historiography In Modern India: 1900-1960

SUBODH KUMAR MUKHOPADHYAY

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Evolution of Historiography
IN
Modern India : 1900-1960

A study of the writing of Indian history by her own historians

Subodh Kumar Mukhopadhyay

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To my parents

Shri Jatindra Nath Mukhopadhyay

&

Shrimati Umashashi Mukhopadhyay

FOREWORD

THOUGH the history of India is very old and rich, Indian historiography is of comparatively recent origin. Very few serious and comprehensive studies of the subject have yet been made, the two most important being *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (1961) edited by C. H. Philips and *Historians and Historiography in Modern India* (1973) edited by S. P. Sen. Both these volumes however have their limitations inevitable in a collection of essays of limited space covering an unlimited range and variety of historians and their works. For the last three decades a number of searching papers, in the form of articles, addresses and short monographs, have indicated possibilities and suggested new directions of research on this subject. Dr. Subodh Kumar Mukhopadhyay's work is a welcome response to such bidding and is a laudable effort to fulfil a longfelt need.

Evolution of Historiography in Modern India, 1900-1960 is the first systematic, comprehensive and analytical work of its kind. Dr. Mukhopadhyay raises vital questions of historical relativism, the spirit of historical enquiry, the problem of choosing models, and the application of concepts and techniques. He also answers these questions with firmness and conviction. He is provocative without being offensive, positive without being dogmatic and scholarly without being pedantic. He seeks to bring out not only the historian but also the man, his attitudes, his philosophy, his strength as well as his weaknesses. This gives a much closer view of the historian he discusses and helps the reader make his own evaluation. Dr. Mukhopadhyay is candid in giving his own impressions but is reluctant to impose these on his readers. Not many authors offer this opportunity. He is appreciative of the contributions made by the great masters of the past such as Jadunath Sarkar, G. S. Sardesai, Surendranath Sen, Dadabhai Naoroji, M. G. Ranade and R. C. Dutt but is not unduly eulogistic. He is critical but not iconoclastic.

The pioneer Indian historians were seekers of truth who were also influenced by the surging tide of nationalism. They were familiar with the works of western historians and had no inhibition in applying western techniques and methodology. Yet, none of them blindly followed any particular model or school. They did not fail to apply independent judgment on the basis of all available evidence at their disposal. Unlike a rather disconcerting recent trend, they did not set out to investigate with any conscious bias or pre-conceived notions. They were not anxious to validate a set of theories or a political philosophy. Their prime concern was to write history as they honestly believed it to be. Their pre-occupation was with the reconstruction of the historical picture, not its frame. The frame was to fit the picture, not the other way around. It is significant that D.D. Kosambi, a pioneer Marxist historian was strongly independent in his approach and analysis and did not hesitate to leave the turnpike-road followed by many other Marxists.

Subodh Kumar Mukhopadhyay is judicious in his selection of the Indian historians for his study. Different types of historians and kinds of historical writings have been chosen giving the work a colourful and representative character. The inclusion of micro-history is particularly welcome. Historians like Satish Chandra Mitra, Narendra Nath Ray and K. V. Krisha Ayyar broke new grounds and were acknowledged pioneers in their own fields. But they now belong to a group of historians whose names are recalled by a nostalgic older generation and barely mentioned by or known to the younger generation. Their works continue to adorn the shelves of university and research libraries but are seldom taken out by the readers. But these were the men who, as the present study underlines, were engaged in writing micro-history long before it became fashionable in the western world and among the west-oriented Indian historians.

Subodh Kumar Mukhopadhyay has succeeded in re-establishing the often overlooked fact that though the origin and growth of modern Indian historiography is much indebted to western historians, it received nourishment from a galaxy of

dedicated Indian historians to whom all of us are deeply indebted. They ensured that Indian historical studies did not develop into an exclusively foreign product and continue to lean heavily on the strorng shoulders of western scholarship, concepts and techniques. They courageously, consistently and successfully fought against intellectual subservience. Present generation of Indian historians cannot afford to allow any reversal of that process or the undermining of that independence of mind.

The views, interpretations and conclusions of Dr. Mukhopadhyay will be carefully examined and challenged but they cannot be brushed aside lightly by any serious and conscientious student of Indian history. That by itself is no mean achievement.

Nemai Sadhan Bose

PREFACE

HISTORIOGRAPHY, inspite of its detractors, has been slowly emerging into a distinct discipline within the broad frame-work of historical studies. Though Indian historical studies have made considerable progress since the days of Rajendralal Mitra, the study of historians, both indigenous and foreign, and their art of writing is still in its infancy. Very recently some scholarly attempts have been made in this direction. But admittedly these are inadequate and much yet remains to be done (for example, a full study of the British Historians of India may be made). The present work, which is a revised and extended version of the doctoral thesis submitted to Jadavpur University for its Ph. D. degree in 1978, is a humble attempt to widen the horizon of this newly emerging discipline. It is, however, neither exhaustive nor definitive. It is just a gentle knock at the door of a new sphere of knowledge.

Before formally introducing my readers to the subject-matter of the work I would like to make one point clear. This is about my approach to the study of historians. A new generation is always welcome to ask new questions of the past. But it cannot expect the earlier generations to see eye to eye with it. The men of the preceding generations lived in a different world with strikingly dissimilar sets of values and problems. Rightly, therefore, they formulated different sets of questions in accordance with the needs of the age. And they answered them according to the best intellectual tradition of their times. Judged by the present yardstick they might have some shortcomings. But to judge them by the standard of the late twentieth century intellectual formulations would be, I am afraid, an injustice to the masters of the past. I have, therefore, tried to put them to the setting of their age and judge them by the standard of their times. That is a bit of historical relativity applied in the study of historians.

A word about the nature of historiographical studies. It is not a conventional historical reseach. In a sense it is difficult, controversial and at the same time dangerous. Jacob Burckhardt once wrote that 'every method is open to criticism and none is universally valid' (Reflections on History, p. 17). Such being the nature of historical studies, historians differ on fundamentals as well as on details. It is a rare possibility that two historians will unreservedly accept the same philosophy, methodology or approach. Nor will they agree on the interpretation of a particular event, policy or personality. This is one of the reasons why G. R. Elton once discouraged the study of historiography. Basic differences in outlook and approach are invariably reflected in the study of historians. For instance, Jadunath Sarkar has been variously called an 'imperialist historian', an anglo-phile, an anti-Muslim, anti-Maratha and a man having pro-Persian bias. Historically he was something. But this 'something' will not satisfy all the parties involved in the controversy. To that extent the study of historiography is risky and has always a chance of incurring the displeasure of some sections. I crave their indulgence.

Before I take leave I must put on record my debt to my teachers and colleagues. First, I acknowledge my debt to late Dr. N. K. Sinha who initiated me in the field of historical research. Shri N. R. Ray, Director, Institute of Historical Studies (Calcutta), gave inspiration and help at different stages of my studies for which I am indebted to him. Dr. Nemai Sadhan Bose, Professor of History, Jadavpur University, and Supervisor of my thesis was all help and encouragement. For this I will remain ever grateful to him. I am also grateful to Dr. Amitabha Mukherjee, the present Head, History Department, Jadavpur University, for the unstinted help and co-operation that I received. Mr. Anil Kumar Chatterjee of the National Library deserves sincere thanks for his timely help. Thanks are also due to Mr. Asaduzzaman of the Department of Persian and Urdu of Hooghly Mohsin College for his ungrudging co-operation. Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi, came forward with the promise of finan-

cial assistance without which it would have been difficult for me to publish this work. For their generous and timely help I must thank them.

Lastly, I should also acknowledge my debt to my wife Shrimati Devjani Mukhopadhyay. But for her constant help and encouragement the work would never have been completed and published. A word of praise is also due to my little son Sunando who patiently bore with me during my busy days of teaching, reading and writing.

Krishnagar Govt. College. Subodh Kumar Mukhopadhyay
Krishnagar, Nadia, 1980.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

EVOLUTION OF historiography in modern India (1900-1960)—a study of the writing of Indian history by her own historians—traces the development of Indian historiography in the first six decades of the present century. The entire work has been divided into seven chapters. Chapter Two, *Background*, gives a summary of major trends in European historiography in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, their impact on historiography in modern India and a brief resume of Indian historical studies in the nineteenth century. Chapter Three, *Evolutionary School of Political and Institutional Historians,* is concerned with the three historians of this class, Jadunath Sarkar, Govind Sakharam Sardesai and Surendra Nath Sen. All three had an abiding faith in the evolutionary idea of history. Chapter Four, *Nationalist School of Economic Historians*, deals with the three outstanding pioneers of Indian economic studies —Dadabhai Naoroji, Mahadev Govind Ranade and Romesh Chandra Dutt. Their searching enquiry into the colonial phase of Indian economy initiated what is now known as economic nationalism. Chapter Five, *Multi-Dimensional School of Cultural and Social Historians*, surveys the works and crafts of three important luminaries in the field—K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, Radhakamal Mukherjee and Damodar Dharmanand Kosambi. They put stress on multi-dimensional approach and the concept of whole man. Chapter Six, *Rational School of Local and Regional Historians*, concentrates on the three practitioners of micro-history, Satish Chandra Mitra, Narendra Nath Ray and K. V. Krishna Ayyar. Satish Chandra wrote on two Bengal districts, Narendra Nath on Bihar and Krishna Ayyar on Kerala. What distinguishes them from others of this group is that they have tried to avoid regional bias. The last chapter concludes the study with a short discussion on the prevailing trends in Indian historiography.

A word about the choice of historians. I have selected those representative historians who have made significant contribution to their respective fields of study. In grouping them I have not followed the traditiodal periodisation of Indian history in the study of historians. They have been grouped according to their special contribution to a particular aspect of historical studies. Thus Jadunath, Surendranath and Sardesai are political and institutional historians, Naoroji, Ranade and R. C. Dutt are economic historians, Sastri, Mukherjee and Kosambi are cultural and social historians, Satish Chandra, Narendra Nath an l Krishna Ayyar are local and regional historians. True, so ne of them have contributed to other branches of historical studies, for example, Jadunath wrote *Economics of British India*, R. C. Dutt wrote *History of Civilisation in Ancient India* but these are obviously their subsidiary and minor writings.

I have excluded political historians of ancient India as the political history of this period is still uncertain and vague or atleast not as certain as that of other two periods. For obvious reasons living historians have been excluded. The solitary exception is the case of K. V. Krishna Ayyar. He has been included for two reasons. First, the regional study is relatively a late development in Indian historiography and as such all representative historians are living and, secondly, because Ayyar is one of the pioneers in Kerala studies.

In the treatment of historlans, I have put emphasis on the following aspects of their life, work and craft : (i) a general introduction, (ii) a brief biographical sketch, (iii) form and content of works, (iv) attitude towards sources and their interpretation, (v) narrative, style and analysis, (vi) pattern and bias, if any, (vii) methodology, (viii) philosophy of history, (ix) spirit of the age—the impact of nationalism, (x) shortcomings, if any, (xi) conclusion.

The selected historians, except one, belonged to the middle class intelligentsia of the late nineteenth century. Their social status, family background, education, official career, character and temperament give interesting hints to the working of forces that shaped their mind, bias and attitude to history. A minute study of Jadunath's family background, education,

official career etc. gives atleast one reason why he was soft towards British rule. The late nineteenth century moral atmosphere and intellectual climate in Bengal did much to mould his view of history. Similarly, a study of Nilakanta Sastri's life and times will provide sufficient clues to an understanding of his pro-orthodox Hindu bias. The present work has only touched upon the point leaving details to be worked out by later writers.

My two predecessors in the field are C. H. Philips edited *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* and S. P. Sen edited *Historians and Historiography in Modern India.* The former is 'a study in historiographical trends, from the old Sanskrit historical literature to recent trends in historical writings in Urdu'. It is not a study of individual historians, their works and craftsmanship. The latter is a collection of essays read at a seminar and not a systematic study of the evolution of Indian historiography in all its aspects. However, both of them are very useful in their own way, the former dealing with certain specific trends in Indian historical studies and the latter being a collection of learned articles contributed by about forty Indian scholars on forty Indian and British historians. The present work is based on an entirely different pattern, (i) it is exclusively a study of Indian historians, (ii) it is a study of all aspects of historiography, (iii) it is a study on a comprehensive scale including all aspects of an historian's life, work and craft, and finally (iv) of the twelve historians treated in this work, seven are introduced for the first time.

In the preparation of the work I have exhaustively used all relevant papers, biographies, letters of the historians, newspaper articles, journals, speeches and correspondence which have in any way bearing on my subject matter. Secondary sources on this subject being meagre I had to depend primarily on the personal papers, lectures, addresses and memoirs of the historians and their works. In dealing with them I have dispassionately tried to explain their viewpoints. I have not built up an ideal model and judged the historians accordingly. My aim throughout has been to study and reveal them as they are withou t bothering about highly controversial issues like

the meaning and purpose of historical studies, an ideal methodology or an appropriate philosophy of history. I have not tried to impose a uniform, ideal pattern or model on them. How far I have been successful in my efforts it is for others to judge. Finally, I have noticed in some cases, a gap between historical principles enunciated by a particular historian and his actual practice—an eternal conflict between theory and practice, idealism and realism—a lapse perhaps common to many of the practitioners of the craft all the world over.

Lastly, historians often talk of impartial, accurate and scientific history. It is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve it in practice. A purely objective history is, however, a noble dream. The historian is bound to introduce an element of subjectivity in the study of history. So the absolute, unchanging truth eludes him. 'Clio may be in possession of the truth, but to the historian she will at best, in exchange for his labour and devotion, vouchsafe a glimpse. Never will she surrender the whole of her treasure. The most that we can hope for is a partial rendering, an approximation, of the real truth about the past.'[1]

1. P. Geyl, *Use and Abuse of History*, p. 63.

Chapter Two

BACKGROUND

I

Just as the seventeenth century in Europe was the Age of Scholarship, the eighteenth that of Enlightenment and Reason, the nineteenth was the century for history.[1] The century for history witnessed a profound revolution in the conception, methodology, technique and principles of the study of history. Scientific modern European historiography emerged in full form and content; in biological terms, it moved from youth to maturity in the course of this century.

> "Certainly in the increase of positive historical knowledge, the elaboration of sound historical method, the enlargement of the range of historical evidence, and especially in the development of the historical way of looking at things, the 19th century stands out conspicuously among any century since Renaissance."[2]

There is a general agreement among scholars that the nineteenth century Romantic Movement in Europe created the proper historical attitude and the historiography of the age.[3] G. P. Gooch, a pioneer in historiographical studies, expresses almost the same opinion. In his view the historical science had to wait till the nineteenth century, the Age of the Second Renaissance, for its proper development.[4] The conception of history as a continuous process is an intellectual gift of the romantic spirit whose another major contribution is the apocalyptic approach.[5]

Eighteenth-century history was not written in the proper historical spirit. Scholars of this century had no conception of development and progressive change. Gibbon's *Decline and fall of the Roman Empire*, the most outstanding historical work of this century, is too much philosophical. Its spirit is didactic and not strictly historical. It is nevertheless a high ranking philosophical treatise and a classic in literature. Though the

eighteenth century was not properly the century for history, the scholars of this century none the less made valuable contribution to the growth of European historiography. Resting on the advance made by the Renaissance scholars and the humanists,

> "the eighteenth century rationalist scholars gave history right to regard itself as an independent form of enquiry, seeking its own answers to its own problems, and following its own canons of proof and purpose. They looked for causes, for a connecting chain in the seemingly meaningless sequence of events, and if they could be crudely mechanical, they also taught that there is secular sense to be made of past, present and future."[6]

The basic differences between them and those of the nineteenth century lie in their very attitude and purpose and in the conception of history which appeared to the latter as a scientific and intellectual apparatus of scholarship.[7]

Despite occasional remarkable achievements of the eighteenth century historians, the scientific-critical, disciplined and systematic study of history really began only in the nineteenth century. Only then historians began to absorb the lessons of the antiquarians and developed the techniques of modern historiography. It was only then that well-defined principles, a science of historical criticism and methods of historical studies came into being. A rich variety in approaches (Rankean formula, evolutionary method, positivism, relativism, etc.) and even more varied and spectacular ideas of historical laws, cause and effect invaded the field. All these novel ideas found expression in the outstanding works of European mastercraftsmen.

The nineteenth century saw an unparalleled intellectual revolution in the field of historical ideas. Historians began 'to think in terms of change and of change as having causes'. This new outlook made its influence felt in many branches of historical studies and research. In fact, the evolutionary theory almost revolutionised the entire historical thinking. Historians found a very convenient and useful doctrine in natural science which well fitted into their scheme of things. It took account of their 'mental preoccupation with change and at the same

time sounded undoctrinaire' and undogmatic. Some are inclined to take the view that this evolutionary theory led to 'the biological determinism' found in Oswald Spengler's *Decline of the West* and other racist histories.[8] The evolutionary theory, however, has something in common with the theory which sees the hand of God in History. God and evolution are supposed to explain everything in history.

The evolutionary theory again brought historians to an almost relativist way of looking at things. Historical relativism is a major intellectual problem of our age, praised by some but ridiculed by others. It demands that in judging 'the men of a particular age with their virtues and vices we must see them within the system of their time and judge them by the standards and principles of their epoch'. As Burckhardt puts it "It is all a question of relative importance, of the dominant at any particular time."[9] In course of time the evolutionary theory got somewhat discredited and suffered in influence as 'it was readily undermined by the habits of caution and the particular study' to which the historians of our time are now being increasingly trained. But relativism still holds the ground and has been swaying historical thinking in our days.

Another major intellectual trend in historical thinking was positivism. Under its influence a new kind of historiography arose which may be called positivistic historiography.[10] Positivistic historiography had two distinctive features—ascertaining of facts and discovery of laws. European historiography accepted only the first part of the positivistic programme. Historians like Mommsen and Maitland became great masters of details. The second feature of the positivistic programme was avoided first and finally discarded by the more alert historians.

The nineteenth century English historians had very little interest in the theory of what they were doing.[11] In spite of this general reluctance to philosophise their craft, they appear to have been influenced to some extent by their intellectual environment. Under the spell of Darwin and Spencer the idea of progress,[12] which by this time lost much of its attraction with the historians across the channel, became with them

almost an article of faith. But the closing years of the century saw them in a new frame of mind and they began to study the past in a spirit of impartiality and detachment. They began to look upon the past as a proper field for a dispassionate and scientific study. They started criticising the idols of English historians, Gibbon and Macaulay, and brought them down from their high pedestal for being biased and prejudiced and for taking sides. This was the period of Stubbs and Maitland. The English historians now mastered 'the objectively scientific critical methods' of the great Germans. They learnt to study facts in all their details with a proper apparatus of scholarship.

Germany, the home of historical criticism, witnessed a good deal of intellectual exercise in the theory of history. German scholars have always regarded the historian as a scientist, history taking the place of nature. As German historicism took its first inspiration from two sources, 'the textual criticism of the philologist and the mechanics of physical science', it was rather inclined to take a mechanical view of history.[13] It explained history in plain terms of cause and effect. It laid too much emphasis on objectivity, ignoring the subjective element involved in the study of the past. It failed to recognise that "history is a continuous process of interaction between the historian and his facts, an unending dialogue between the present and the past".[14] But the most brilliant and enduring aspect of German historiography is its scrupulous adherence to facts, accuracy of details, detachment and impartiality and stead-fastness in holding on to truth. This is the legacy bequeathed to posterity by two leading representatives of German historiography, Niebuhr and Ranke.

In France the Annales School was dominating the field. It was an attempt 'to understand a whole society in every detail, in all its intricate interrelations and activities and therefore put too much emphasis on analysis'.[15] It also sought to enquire into the motivations of the people. The annales method contributed substantially to the development of historical writings. It tackled many genuine deficiencies but clearly it was not all. In many fields it is clearly insufficient and can not answer all the problems of history. The spirit of modern French histo-

riography is Bergsonian.[16] The French historian seeks, following Bergsonian formula (s'installer dans le mouvement) 'to install oneself in the movement', to understand history, which is always in a flux, by being one with it. Armed with imaginative sympathy he can then express it with brilliance and brevity. This the Germans 'hidebound by their facts' can not do. The French, on the otherhand, cannot treat isolated facts with the same scientific accuracy, precision and detachment as the Germans do. The only intellectual movement which rightly grasped the true nature of historical studies was the one initiated by Benedetto Croce in Italy. Croce asserted fully the autonomy of history, and the maxim that philosophy and science have nothing to do with history. He also propagated the principle that all history is contemporary history since we see the past through the present.[17] The historian is to assert, he tells us, what the evidence before him obliges him to assert. There is no such thing as partisan history, patriotic history or history inspired by liberal, humanitarian or socialist ideals.

The Marxist historians claim that 'Marx with his ideas of social evolution is co-eval with Darwin' and that he should be justly regarded as the Darwin of the social sciences.[18] Marx's historical materialism or materialistic conception of history is a direct reaction against Hegel's idealism and Feuerbach's mechanical materialism. Marx adopted Hegelian dialectic with its characteristic feature of thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis and applied it in explaining historical development. Central theme of his theory is materialism, the mode of production and consequent changes in social relations. 'It is a highly sophisticated intellectual formula used in explaining the rich diversities and varieties of history'. This schematic approach, however, appears to some people to be too rigid for the subtlety and richness of history. Still it has considerable influence on the conception of history and historical writing. Apart from orthodox Marxists, one can see 'the influence at work with some eminent European historians' from R. H. Tawney to J. D. Bernal, Sir George Clark to A. H. M. Jones.

The distinctive features of European historiography, during the period under study, appear to be four in number (i) object

of history and historical studies, (ii) methodology, (iii) attitude to sources and (iv) principle of interpretation. The most debatable point is the object of history and historical studies. It includes such diverse and dissimilar objects as 'the demonstration of Divine Justice to the unfolding of Human Freedom, Progress, Evolution of Mankind, a long march from primitive communism to Scientific Socialism' and many other things. Since it is generally regarded as an eternal quest for truth,[19] history is the record of human activities through the ages with the strictest accuracy of facts as far as possible. As regards methodology, the approach differs. It ranges from purely objective to purely subjective—history is what the facts before the historian oblige him to tell, the Rankean method,[20] and history is what the historian makes it, the Collingwood thesis ; in between we have critical—scientific and analytical method, the Annales School. About source materials the ideal is that one should tap all types of information, relevant and useful for his subject, without being biased and prejudiced. One should not wilfully ignore or bypass any material simply because it does not suit his pet theory or pre-conceived notion. In the treatment of materials one should maintain utmost detachment as far as possible. The spirit should be that of a dispassionate judge and not of an advocate.

It is needless to emphasize that Indian historical studies and thinking were profoundly influenced by the ideas of Western historical scholarship.[21] Old ideas of history were greatly modified and almost a completely new system developed on the basis of the canons of European system. European historical ideas, its techniques of research, concepts, principles, methodology and above all its view of history came to mould and influence the Indian historians and the writing of Indian history. Indian historians first borrowed techniques and methods, then concepts and finally systems from the West. Though their main inspiration came from the West, the hidden power of tradition also played a part. It is occasionally reflected in their writings and it was reinforced by the impact of nationalism.

"In the late nineteenth century there were two ways before the historian. He could either transmute history into a

sociological and evolutionary science, drawing inspiration from Comte, Quetelet, Marx, Spencer or Taylor, or he could investigate and write history by means of scientific methods, laid down by Ranke, without developing any hypothesis or enquiring after any law in history."[22]

Indian historians seem to have opted for the latter course, at least in the early years of the present century. They studied the past objectively, using contemporary sources and writing dispassionately as far as possible. Only in the later years of the century the other brand of history, sociological, evolutionary and Marxist, has been slowly taking over the field.

It is interesting to know the important developments in Indian historiography which grew upon the European model. The most encouraging development has been the collection of huge source materials for the study of Indian history. Archaeological excavations and explorations which had begun in the nineteenth century as part of British Orientalism and of India's endeavour to unearth her golden past, produced much valuable historical evidence hitherto unknown. Discovery of numerous original source materials helped almost wholly to recast the history of India. Systematic and sustained efforts were made, following Western example, to collect and edit numerous literary works, manuscripts, pamphlets and records, both official and private, which now constitute the foundation of Indian history. Following German example central and provincial archives were organised, maintained and used by scholars.

With the collection of materials the Indian scholars were brought to face the more difficult task of interpreting and analysing them in an impartial and impersonal manner. Here also the spirit of European historiography served as a model. In handling sources and interpreting them Indian historians followed the high standard set by European masters such as Ranke, Mommsen and Maitland. As regards the object of historical studies, the spirit of European historical scholarship became the cornerstone of modern Indian historiography. The highest ideal of historical studies is the unravelling of the mysterious past and the discovery of truth. The ideal of truth as the object of historical studies is firmly rooted among the new

generation of Indian historians, the exception only proves the general rule more convincingly. In history, as in national life, the motto is "Truth shall prevail", however elusive that goal may prove to be in practice.

II

What Abu Raihan Alberuni has said about the absence of history and historical sense of the Hindus in the early eleventh century[23] was exactly true of the Indians at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Historical science was then practically unknown to the Indian scholars. The total output of Indian historical scholarship in this century is very meagre compared to the voluminous body of literature produced in the West during the same period. It goes without saying that a scientific, critical and intelligent enquiry into India's past heritage started with the active participation and under the inspiration of the Orientalists,[24] a galaxy of scholars, civil servants and educationists who between them developed an espirit de corps and gathered round the nucleus of Asiatlc Society of Bengal (1784), the most important single institution playing a very useful and vital role in the discovery of India's past. "They (the orientalists) both historicised the Indian past and stimulated a consciousness of history in the Indian intellectual."[25] The beginning of serious historical studies in India is, however, a matter of lively debate. R. C. Majumder is of the view that the study of Indian history by the Indians in the last century started almost as a reaction against the writings of European scholars who often gave a prejudiced and distorted version of India's history and culture.[26] There is no denying that the Indian historians sharply reacted to the viewpoints set forth by the early British historians of India like James Mill, Elphinstone, Grant Duff and others. To refute the charges of European scholars and set things right might have been a powerful motive with the Indian historians in the latter part of the century, but at the beginning the dominant passion seems to have been an insatiable thirst for history infused into the Indian mind by the orientalists and the impact of Western education. Possibly another important

and powerful motivation was the desire to discover and record India's golden past.

The impulse to unearth India's hidden past undoubtedly came from the Western ideas and thought. "The rediscovery and revitalisation of a Hindu golden age was probably the orientalist's most enduring ideological coutribution to modern India's cultural self-image."[27] The Bengali intelligentsia which was the first to receive and react to the Western ideas and usher in an awakening in Bengal and thence to India became also the pioneer in the task of uncovering India's rich cultural heritage. In the nineteenth century Bengal was not only making history she was also writing it. Bengal historians, saturated with Western ideas and thought, inspired by a deep love for the motherland, and imbued with a sense of history imported from the West, borrowed methods, techniques and guiding principles of Western historical scienee and applied them successfully in sifting, editing and interpreting ancient texts, newly discovered historical evidences and archaeological finds. Further, they enthusiastically collaborated with the orientalists, both in India and abroad, in the task of unlocking many a hidden chamber of India's past.

Taking their cue from the orientalists the Derozians, a band of young intellectuals imbued with European national-liberal, humanist-rationalist ideas, produced between 1840 and 1843, through their 'Society for the Acquisition of General Knowledge', three volumes of papers on different aspects of Indian history and culture.[28] The young Derozians, vibrating with robust optimism and an abiding faith in India's destiny, made valuable contribution to Indian studies not only by emphasizing its importance but by creating a new sense of history and historical consciousness among a wider section of Bengali intelligentsia which bore fruits only in the later years of the century when Clio claimed a good number of Bengali scholars as her ardent devotee.

The nineteenth century Indian historiography however, does not seem to have had a good start. Our scholars started with translations and adaptations[29] of Engiish works and at the initial stage only produced history books for schools and

colleges. In the first half of the century one cannot find a single work of original scholarship. Nevertheless this period is not altogether barren ; it may be called, with some justification, as that of nurturing, schooling and preparation for the Indian scholars. They were, after starting with translation and adaptation, slowly evolving a system of their own, some kind of method and order in the field of historical studies. "In the nineteenth century several Indian scholars, notably Bhagwanlal Indraji, Bhau Daji and Rajendralal Mitra made valuable contributions to historical studies, but their work chiefly consisted of the editing of inscriptions and manuscripts and papers of limited scope on various special problems of early Indian history.[30] While the observation appears to be appropriate as regards the first two scholars the same cannot be said of Rajendralal Mitra, the first scientific historian[31] of modern India. He is the first original historian trained in Western method and technique with a firm grasp and sound knowledge in many branches of Indian studies. A self-made scholar, Rajendralal applied himself to the task of making the mute past tell her untold story. Contributing more than one hundred original papers on Indian history, archaeology and culture,[32] he created a tradition of original research and his works won the high praise of both European and Indian scholars from Max Muller to Tagore. His magnum opus, *Antiquities of Orissa in two volumes* (1875, 1888), is still unapproached for completeness of detail, value and judgement and even today it is regarded as an. authority on the subject. His *Buddha Gaya* (1878) is a complete record of its archaeology. His pioneering studies on the Palas and Senas of Bengal, edition of rare manuscripts and inscriptions, intelligent use of numismatics and epigraphy have assured him a front rank among the pioneers of Indian historical studies.

Rajendralal, by his deep erudition and scholarship, cast a spell on the contemporaries and near contemporaries. Haraprasad Shastri seems to have been influenced and inspired by Rajendralal to undertake the studies of Buddhism in Bengal. He contributed about thirty original papers[33] on his favourite theme—Sanskrit and Buddhist literature and Nepalese manus-

cripts. It is to be noted that all his conclusions are not tenable today and many of them have been rightly challenged and refuted. Ramesh Chandra Dutt, famous for his two volumes of economic history, produced in 1889 *A History of Civilisation in Ancient India* in three volumes, based on Sanskrit sources, but as Nivedita aptly puts it, "it was never a work of original scholarship[34] neither was it intended to be as the sole aim of the author was an exposition to India and to the world of the national glory". Another representative Bengal historian of the last century was Akshoy Kumar Maitra whose critical study of Sirajuddaulah created quite a sensation in the closing years of the century and the work was hailed by Tagore.[35] But it must be noted that though the work broke a new ground it was based entirely on printed English books and not a single original source was consulted.[36]

Muhammad Latif's *History of the Punjab* (1881) deals with the history of that romantic land and people from the remotest antiquity down to 1880. It is an important piece of historical work based mainly on English secondary sources and Urdu and Persian original sources. The author (not a number of the profession and as such does not claim systematic scholarship) appears to have some idea of Western historical scholarship. He quotes approvingly Gurwood's well-known observation about historical truth[37] and claims to have based his own work on historical truth as he understood it. Party spirit or sectarian attitude,[38] he tells us, was not allowed to colour his writing. He is aware of the idea of objective history and of the difficulty of discovering the elusive historical truth. In spite of this awareness he appears to be a little biased in favour of British Rule and in the true Victorian spirit he extols the virtues and manifold blessings of the British Raj. His treatment of Sikh history is on the whole sympathetic and imaginative ; only to a limited extent it is scholarly and objective. In analysing the decaying, corrupt and degenerate Mughal power he displays the insight of an historian, but his treatment of the Gurus is biased and his survey of the Sikh wars betrays his lack of judgement and balance. So far as the Sikh wars are concerned he appears to have worked on the dictum 'the king can do no

wrong'. Atleast on this point one can validly bring against him the charge of partisanship. Despite many limitations Latif's pioneering work may be considered as a milestone in the nineteenth century Indian historiography because it gives for the first time a complete account of the Punjab.

Kaviraj Shyamal Das, the celebrated author of *Virvinod* (1886), a five-volume history of Mewar in Hindi, made valuable contribution to historical writings of the century. A charan of medieval stock, he received a good and varied education and became renowned as a scholar. The Maharana, being impressed by his abilities and erudition, entrusted him with the task of compiling a detailed history of Mewar. He did it so efficiently that he has been called the great organizer of historical research on modern lines in Rajputana.[39] It was he who for the first time introduced in Rajput history the modern method of research on a comprehensive scale. He harnessed to his aid all available sources of information, original as well as secondary, official and unofficial and such evidences as inscriptions, copper-plates and coins. He created a tradition of original research in Rajputana and thereby paved the way for his worthy successor Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha. Though reared in the bardic tradition, Shyamal Das seems to have perceived the significance of scientific method. His monumental history of Mewar, inspite of a few limitations in the handling of sources and its digressions[40] into histories of other Rajput states, is a recognised historical work of some merit.

Of the Maratha historians of this century Kashinath Trimbak Telang, Vishwanath Kashinath Rajwade, and Vasudeo Vamanshastri Khare deserve special mention. A serious scholar deeply rooted in the past, Telang contributed a few papers of limited scope on some special problems of Indian Culture in the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society and the Indian Antiquary.[41] His papers were mainly on such topics as the date of Shankaracharya, the antiquity of Ramayana, the Gita and the Upanishads. Many of them were written either in reply to the biased thesis of the foreigners or simply as an exposition of the theme. Apart from his stray papers on inscriptions and epigraphy, his only contribution to historio-

graphy is his *Gleanings from Maratha Chronicles* (1900) dealing with social, religious and political life of Maharashtra under the Peshwas.[42] As the work was based mainly on manuscript sources and the author had a fair acquaintance with the techniques of historical research, '*Gleanings*' may be regarded as a product of mature scholarship. The closing years of the century saw both V. K. Rajwade and V. V. Khare on the threshold of publishing their monumental works on the source materials of Maratha history. They 'created an interest in research in the history of the Marathas from original documents'.[43] In 1892 Khare brought out a monograph on Nana Fadnis in Marathi which despite certain errors of judgement became very popular.

Sayyid Ahmad Khan, the founder of Aligarh movement and the prophet of modernisation among the Indian Muslims, made some contribution to nineteenth century historiography. Trained in the traditional Urdu education and brought up in the traditions of medieval muslim historians of Delhi, Sayyid Ahmad developed "a keen interest in history and religion".[44] He had a definite purpose in going over to the study of history. It was the revival of interest among his people in the Muslim Past, both in India and abroad. This was obviously a part of his reformist and modernisation programme. His most important historical work in Urdu, *Asar-us-Sanadid* (1847), an account of the antiquities of Delhi with a chapter on contemporary manners and society, is based on original Persian sources. It is considered by scholars as a historical work of some merit.[45] An earlier writing of Sayyid Ahmad, the *Jam-i-Jam* in Persian (1839) is merely a tabulated account of the Mughal rule from Babar to Bahadur Shah and therefore "an obvious continuation of the taqwim form of historiography".[46] In 1858 Sayyid Ahmad, realising the importance of the study of the revolt from the Indian point of view, wrote a long essay in Urdu which was subsequently translated into English and published by the Government of India in 1860.[47] The importance of the work lies in the fact that it is "the most significant single Indian contribution to the debate on the Mutiny".[48] He dwelt at length on the causes of the revolt and maintained that interference with religion and resumption of rent-free land were

"the original and principal causes of disaffection", and absence of the Indians in the legislative councils "formed the main originating cause of this rebellion". His analysis of the causes of the revolt and remedies suggested by him are not, of course, totally acceptable today. What is historically significant is that his essay 'touched off a lively debate in official circle and played a useful role in the series of reforms launched by the British Government after the event'. Between 1855 and 1864 Sayyid Ahmad edited *Abul Fazal's Ain-i-Akbari*, Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firushahi* and emperor Jahangir's autobiography, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*. It is too much to claim that "these two works (Asar and Ain) alone would entitle him to a high position among the scholars of the world".[49] What is significant and noteworthy in the historical writings of Sayyid Ahmad is that he seems to have had an idea of the basic principles of Western historical scholarship and his method was based on 'the textual study of original documents'.

Ram Krishna Gopal Bhandarkar, a man of sound scholarship and wide knowledge in many branches of Indian studies, is the author of two important historical works, *Early History of the Deccan* (1814) and *A peep into the Early History of India* (1890). Besides these two works, Bhandarkar contributed numerous articles in the Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Indian Antiquary, Epigraphia Indica etc.[50] Though the author himself calls his '*Early History of the Deccan* "merely a congeries of facts", it is the first connected history of the Deccan from the earliest times to the Muslim conquest "based on a thorough and critical analysis of all sources available till then.[51] His '*Peep*' traces Indian history from the beginning of the Maurya period to the end of the Gupta Empire. He is perhaps "the earliest important indigenous historian of ancient India".[52] Bhandarkar appears to have been influenced by Ranke in his attitude to history, for he approvingly quotes his famous dictum 'the past as it actually was' and as such his approach was that of the nineteenth century.

The historians selected here for discussion by no means exhaust the list. But this bare outline of the writings of repre-

sentative historians of the nineteenth century just gives an indication of their method and approach, range of study, temperament, knowledge of the craft and contribution to the growth of historical studies in India. The total output is not very impressive, and some individual works are simply disappointing. Neither in depth nor in variety it can seriously engage the attention of scholars. Almost all works deal mainly with political history ; social history is only marginally discussed and economic history almost ignored and bypassed. In the first half of the century most of the works are modelled on those of the Europeans and written not strictly in accordance with the accepted canons of historical studies. Most of the writers, barring a limited few, had neither any idea of methodology nor any clear understanding or original thinking about the craft.[53] Many of them being surcharged with emotion, took up pen either to glorify the Indian past (which actually did more harm that good to the growth of historical scholarship) or to refute charges and misrepresentation by foreigners.

But the picture is slightly different in the second half of the century. Some scholars of international repute and standing, familiar with Western historical writings and their basic principles, wielded pen as the dedicated devotee of Clio and raised Indian historiography to its modern and scientific status. It moved from infancy to adolescence but had to wait till the twentieth century for its youth. The nineteenth century-historiography, despite its many deficiencies, did however, one thing. It equipped and prepared our scholars. The entire century was for them a period of schooling in the science of history. It infused into them a sense of history and historical consciousness. Clio was firmly and respectfully seated on the altar of learning and there was no respite for the Indian scholars till her demand was met.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Peter Geyl, *Use and Abuse of History*, p. 32. "If the nineteenth century may be called the age of history, it is also the age in which history had been used to serve revolution or reaction, power or party." Ibid., p. 44.

2. Edward G. Bourne, *Essays in Historical Criticism*, p. 245.
3. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, *Scholar Extraordinary : Life of Rt. Hon. Friedrich Max Muller*, p. 86. P. Geyl, *Debates with Historians*, p. 14.
4. G. P. Cooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 13.
5. Nirad C. Chaudhuri, op. cit., p. 86.
6. G. R. Elton. *The Practice of History*, p. 13.
7. Ibid., p. 15.
8. G. R. Elton, op. cit., p. 47.
9. Quoted by A. L. Rowse, *The use of History*, p. 101.
10. R. G. Collingwood. *The Idea of History*, p. 127.
11. R. G. Coliingwood, op. cit , p. 143.
12. The Idea of progress originated with Turgot and Condorcet in the Age of Reason. It is related to the idea of evolution. Darwin's idea of biological evolution was used to explain historical evolution. Darwin practically revolutionised the nineteenth century thinking by his two famous publications *The Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871).
13. G. R. Elton, op. cit., p. 38.
14. E. H. Carr, What is History ?, p. 30.
15. G. R. Elton, op. cit., p. 167.
16. R. G. Collingwood, op. cit., p. 189.
17. The historian who is in the present recreass the past in his mind through his study of documents and other materials relating to the past.
18. A. L. Rowse, op. cit., p. 87.

F. Engels on Marx : "Just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic matter so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history".

19, About the definition of truth scholars will obviously differ and will raise a lot of questions about its nature. One thing is, however, certain. Absolute truth is beyond us and we must be satisfied with approximate truth.

20. J. D. Bernal goes so far as to regard objectivity as equivalent to an individualist and unregulated economic system. He calls it meaningless history. (*Science in History* Vol. IV, pp. 1080-1081)

21. R. C. Majumdar, *Historiography of Modern India*, p. 1.
22. Amales Tripathi, *Evolution of Historiography in America*, p. 43.
23. Edward C. Sachau. *Alberuni's India*, Vol. II, pp. 10-11.

'Unfortunately the Hindus do not pay much attention to the historical order of things, they are very careless in relating the chronological succession of their kings, and when they are pressed for information and are at a loss, not knowing what to say, they invariably take to tale-telling'.

24. David Kopf, *British Orientalism and Bengal Renaissance*, p. 275.
25. Ibid., p. 275.

26. R. C. Majumdar, "Nationalist Historians" in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, ed. C. H. Philips p. 416.

27. David Kopf, op. cit., p. 284.

28. S. Sarkar, "Derozio and young Bengal" in *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance* ed. A. C. Gupta, p. 26. Some of them have been published in Gautam Chatterjee ed. 'Awakening in Bengal in early nineteenth century.

As with other renaissances all over the world, the Derozians rightly perceived the importance of historical studies in the regeneration of a nation. They also initiated the study of what is known as the philosophy of history. vide K.M. Banerjee's article *The Nature and importance of Historical Studies*, reprinted in Gautam Chatterjee ed. op. cit., p. 4.

29. Bimala Prasad Mukherji, 'History' in A. C. Gupta, ed., op. cit., p. 363.

30. A. L. Basham, 'Modern Historians of Ancient India' in *Studies in Indian History and Culture*, pp. 218-29.

31. Sisir K. Mitra, Rajendralal Mitra in S. P. Sen ed., *Historians and Historiography in modern India*, p. 1.

K. K. Dasgupta, *Indian Historiography and Rajendralal Mitra*.

32. All are published in the Journal and Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. A selection of these articles is published under the title *Indo-Aryans*, 2 vols., (1881).

33. All are published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

34. Nivedita's article on Ramesh Chandra Dutt, *Modern Review*, Jan. 1910.

35. Part of the work appeared as articles in *Sadhana*, at one time edited by Rabindranath Tagore. See A. R. Mallick, *Modern Historical writing in Bengali* in C. H. Philips ed. op. cit., pp. 449-50.

36. Jadunath Sarkar, *Bengal Past and Present*, Jubilee No. 1957.

37. Gurwood Despatches of the Duke of Wellington. History is the exact illustration of events as they occurred; history should contain the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but truth.

38. Muhammad Latif, *History of the Punjab*, Preface vi.

He has another historical work to his credit. It is *Lahore : its history, architecture, remains and antiquities etc.* (Lahore, 1892). His *Agra, Historical and Descriptive* (Cal, 1896) belongs to the same cenre of historical literature.

39. K. R. Qanungo, *Historical Essays*, p. 71.

40. G. N. Sharma, Kaviraj Shyamal Das in S. P. Sen ed., op. cit., p. 288.

41. *Indian Antiquary*, Started by Dr. Burgess in 1872.

42. The essay was published as an appendix to M. G. Ranade's *Rise of the Maratha Power* (1900).

43. A. M. Vairat, V. V. Khare in S. P. Sen ed., op. cit., p. 215.

44. Z. A. Faruqi, Sir Sayyid Ahmad and Maulana Shibli in *Historians of Medieval India* ed. by Mahibbul Hasan, p. 234.

45. A. B. M. Habibullah, 'Historical writings in Urdu—A survey in tendencies' in C. H. Philips ed., op. cit., p. 482.

46. Ibid., p. 483.

47. Sayyid Ahmad Khan. *An essay on the causes of the Indian revolt*, Calcutta 1860.

48. Thomas R. Metcalf, *The aftermath of Revolt—India 1857 to 1870*, p. 88.

49. M. Mujeeb, *Indian Muslims*, p. 447.

50. All these have been published in the collected works of Bhandarkar in four volumes by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, (1927-33). He is perhaps the first Indian historian to write an interesting paper on *Critical, Comparative and Historical Method of Inquiry*, BCW Vol. I pp, 362-93.

51. A. D. Pusalker, G. R. Bhandar in S. P. Sen ed., op. cit., p. 30.

52. A. L. Basham, op. cit., p. 219. In his opinion Bhandarkar was far more critical of his sources than were many European historians of ancient India. C. H. Philips op. cit., p. 281.

53. The Indian historians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were all practising craftsmen, not theoreticians philosophizing on there craft. Only recently some attempts have been made in this direction.

CHAPTER THREE

EVOLUTIONARY SCHOOL OF POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL HISTORIANS

I

G. R. ELTON writes that "good historians may be born, but true historians are made."[1] Jadunath Sarkar was not a born good historian but a true historian made—"the consummation of a life of preparation, planning, hard industry and ascetic devotion to a great mission."[2] A brilliant student of English literature and a scholar well-grounded in European and world history, he dedicated his long and well-groomed life to the muse of history. Though his subject is Indian, he is obviously a product of the Western School of History,[3] an intellectual disciple of Western mastercraftsmen—Niebuhr, Ranke, Mommsen, Maitland, Greene, Macaulay, Gibbon, Ruskin, Carlyle, Irvine and Napier. Inspiration also came from the masters of English literature—Shakespeare, Milton, Keats and Tennyson. Having been brought up in the relatively free and congenial climate of Victorian liberalism, Jadunath came to develop a balanced, composite historical scholarship. With his P.R.S. thesis *India of Aurangzib* (1901) he set his hand to the plough and laid it down only in 1958 (the year of his demise) with his last monograph on *Military History of India* (published posthumously in 1960). In the intervening period of more than sixty years the Columbus of Mughal history[4] discovered and rehabilitated in the true historical perspective the confused Mughal history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and also touched upon a diverse and rich variety of topics with equal success.

Born on December 10, 1870 in the Rajshahi district of Bangladesh (then Bengal), Jadunath was the third son of Rajkumar Sarkar, an enlightened Zamindar, a liberal and a religious man. He had his early education at Rajshahi, then at the

Presidency College, Calcutta, and finally at the University of Calcutta. All along a brilliant student, Jadunath studied B.A. with double Honours in English and History and did his M.A. in English in 1892 with record marks. Starting his career as a lecturer in English at the Ripon College (now Surendranath College), Calcutta, he gradually drifted towards history and finally surrendered to the jealous mistress Clio. His father who infused into his mind a love for history[5] was perhaps the deciding factor in shaping his career. A long and successful career in the Bengal Provincial Educational Service (1898-1918) was rewarded by a promotion to the Indian Educational Service. After his retirement from the service in 1926 he was burdened with the Vice-Chancellorship of the University of Calcutta for two years. From 1928 to the last days of his life he had been a dedicated soul to the cause of historical studies.

A. L. Srivastava informs us[6] that Jadunath had once conceived the idea of taking up the great event of 1857 as his subject to study but later dropped the idea because of the closeness of the event to him. He switched over to the history of the Mughals because of its wealth of rich historical literature and chiefly because the Mughal history was still a virgin soil. Jadunath himself tells us that he once toyed with the idea of studying the tragic-end of Tipu Sultan of Mysore and actually here his apprenticeship in the history workshop began[7] What ultimately settled the issue is most probably the natural inclination of his genius for a vast canvas, ups and downs of an all-India empire, its tragedy, pity and horror over a long stretch of time. Just as the Decline and fall of the Roman Empire suited the genius of Gibbon, the varied destiny of the Germanic and Latin peoples of Ranke, the heroic exploits of Garibaldi of G. M. Trevelyan, the sixteenth century English social history of R. H. Tawney, the gravity and grandeur of the Bolshevik Revolution of E. H. Carr, the seventeenth and eighteenth century Mughal history, with its mid-day halo and sun-set glow, suited the genius of Jadunath. Since his constructive genius built up the superstructure of Indian history of these two centuries, it would not be unfair if one calls these

two "the Jadunath Centuries".[8] In him one can easily discern a rare combination of scientific outlook and thoroughness of approach, critical enquiry and creative imagination. Twentieth-century Indian historiography has produced no one who can be considered his equal in scholarship, grasp and style. There is no one who can make the past come to life 'so meaningfully and so vividly'.

Jadunath made his debut in the realm of historical scholarship with his *India of Aurangzib—Its Topography, Statistics and Roads* (1901). It was the outcome of successful apprenticeship in the workshop of Mughal history. This short monograph is based on a critical and comparative study of Persian original sources in general and Raichhatraman's *Chahar-i-Gulsan* and Sujan Rai Khatri's[9] *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh* in particular. It is an account of physical conditions—roads, passes, ferries and river routes—supplemented by some statistical information about the late seventeenth-century Mughal India. Importance of the work lies in its being an indication of Jadunath's early preparation, of the making of the historian's mind, growing scholarship and devotion to the pursuit of historical truth. The work was at once hailed as the product of neat and exact scholarship. After this happy initiation into the study of Aurangzib, Jadunath devoted about thirty years' sustained labour to his life's work—*a five-volume study of Aurangzib*, an epic in Indian historiography. It established a happy relationship between 'history and literature without disturbing its essential character as the modern apparatus of critical scholarship'. The life of Aurangzib was, in the view of Jadunath, one long tragedy,[10] and it was developed almost like a perfect drama in all its stages. The first two volumes, from hero's brith (1618) to his final victory in the war of succession, form the dramatic proposition ; the third (1659-1681) takes the story and hero's tragic career to the climax ; the fourth and fifth (1681-1707) show the catastrophic end of Aurangzib's life. A full five-act tragedy is 'unfolded before our eyes with dramatic effect'.

The firsit volume of *History of Aurangzib* (1912) sets the stage with hero's birth (24th Oct. 1618), boyhood and education, training in war, diplomacy and politics, viceroyalty of

the Deccan, Gujarat, Multan and Sindh and again of the Daccan for the second time (1618-1658). The second volume (1912) opens with the battle of Dharmat and closes with his grand enthronement in June, 1659. This volume takes the reader through the great battles of the war of succession—Dharmat, Samugarh, Khajwah and Ajmir, unfolds Aurangzib's tremendous power of overcoming difficulties, his coolness, sagacity, power of managing men and diplomatic skill. He appears in the pages of the historian as the fortune's favourite. The third volume (1916) surveys the first half of Aurangzib's reign down to the end of the Rajput war (1681). Apart from the general development of the period this volume contains a scholarly exposition of the basic principles of the Islamic State—Church in India under Aurangzib, his moral and religious regulations, relations with the outer Muslim World, policy of intolerance towards other faiths, Mughal penetration into the farthest limits of Eastern India, Afghan war, Hindu reaction against Aurangzib's bigotry and religious persecution and the origin and development of the ill-fated Rajput war. The fourth volume (1919) narrates Aurangzib's career in the South upto the capture and death of Shambhuji (1689). The Conquest of Bijapur and Golkunda, defeat and death of Shambhuji marked the apogee of Aurangzib's career. He was the unrivalled lord paramount of Northern India and the Deccan alike. But it was really the beginning of his end. The saddest and the most hopeless chapter of his life now opened which is the theme of the last volume (1689-1707) (1924). After the death of Shambhuji the Maratha war of independence became a people's war, and Aurangzib could not end it.[11] "Slowly but pitilessly his Fate works itself out, finally defeating all his efforts, though the invisible cause of his failure lay in his career and past deeds:"[12] His see-saw battles with the indomitable Marathas were the swan-song of his life which accompanied him through to his journey's end (Khatam-us-safar) at Ahmadnagar in 1707.[13]

While engaged in his life's work Jadunath managed to produce a monograph, *Economics of British India* (1909), which appears to be the outcome of excitement and passionate dis-

cussion of our economic lot engendered by the Partition of Bengal and the Swadeshi movement (1905-1908). Starting with a discussion on geographical factors in Indian economy, he takes on the village economy in all its aspects, Pax Britannica and its political effects, the British system of land revenue, laws of consumption, production and distribution, profits and exchange, effects of home charges, Indian currency and finally public finance. His sources are evidently secondary but the publication was at once a success. This bold attempt is marked by "conscientious investigation of details".[14] Because of his preoccupation with Mughal history Jadunath could not keep himself upto date with Indian economics and, therefore, later stopped its circulation.

Jadunath's study of Aurangzib brought him face to face with his great Maratha adversary Shivaji. This supplementary study of Mughal history, *Shivaji And His Times* (1919), revolutionised the study of Maratha history. It was then considered an intrusion into the sacred preserve of the nationalist school of Maharashtra historians. Shivaji, shorn of myths and legends, took his proper place in history. He is neither a builder of an enduring state nor the maker of an original administrative system. Though exonerated of the charge of murdering an invited guest (Afzal Khan murder), still a greater charge of murdéring the Mores and taking Javli by treachery is levelled against him on irrefutable authority.[15] "His most precious legacy was the spirit that he breathed into his people."[16]

Jadunath edited William Irvine's *Later Mughals* in two volumes (1922) bringing the story of the later Mughals from Aurangzib's death to the invasion of Nadir Shah (1739). He wrote introduction and last three chapters on Nadir Shah (Chapters XI, XII, XIII).[17] Irvine left innumerable notes and manuscripts, the task was very difficult no doubt but Jadunath did it very efficiently and conscientiously. The edition of later Mughals seized him with the idea of bringing the story of fall of the Mughal Empire, on the model of Gibbon's monumental history,[18] to the very end—the capture of Delhi by Lord Lake (1803). He completed the project, *Fall of the Mughal*

Empire, in four volumes in 1950. The first volume (1932) picks up the narrative from the retreat of Nadir Saha and carries it on to the accession of Alamgir II (1754). It gives a connected account of the Mughal Empire, Court factions of Muhammad Shah's reign, Maratha incursions into Bengal and Bihar, story of the Afghans, of the Punjab, Malwa and Rajputana, court intrigues, deposition of Ahmad Shah and accession of Alamgir II. The second volume (1934) surveys eighteen eventful years (1754-1771) in the tragic history of the later Mughals. The theme is the great Afghan-Maratha contest for the lordship of Delhi—Maratha disaster at Panipat, Najibuddaulah's rise as the dictator of Delhi, story of the Jats, Rajputs, Sikhs and Shah Alam's wanderings. The Third volume (1938) tells the story of Delhi Monarchy from the entrance of Shah Alam II into his ancestral capital in 1772 down to the bloody tragedy of 1788. The hero of this period is Mahadji Sindhia. The last volume (1950) takes the story to the end of the Mughal Empire (1803). Actually it traces the fall of two empires and the rise of a third. "Its subject is even more truly the fall of the Maratha Empire."[19] At the root of the fall were Sindia-Holkar rivalry and Nana Fadnis's short-sighted and selfish policy. The British fully exploited the weaknesses of the Indian powers and became the lord paramount of India. 'The blind old shadow' on the throne of Akbar and Aurangzib became, by the treaty of Sarji Anjangoon (30 Dec. 1803) a pensioner of the British. The Mughal Empire as a political institution came to an end. Amidst countless distractions the unity of the theme has been admirably maintained. The Reader does not lose path in the tangled jungle or misty forest of Mughal history as the historian is always by his side to whisper "Delhi is not far off".[20] In the midst of all-pervading gloom and harrowing tales of woe, suffering and utter wastage of human lives, the reader will, however, have occasional glimpses of the sun-set glow of the dying Mughal empire. One important aspect of Jadunath's Mughal studies is that he gives an exact and accurate location of all historical sites and sets at rest many doubtful points and controversies.

Apart from these works, Jadunath made minor excursions into many and varied fields of study. He translated Krishnadas Kaviraj's *Chaitanya charitamrita* (second and third part) under the title *Chaitanya's Life and Teachings* (1922)[21] with appropriate introduction and comments. His studies in *Mughal India* (1919) and *Studies in Aurangzib's Reign* (1933) may justly be regarded as complementary to Mughal studies. In a couple of brilliant essays on such topics as daily lives of Shah Jahan and Aurangzib, Mughal heroines Shahibji and Zeb-un Nisa, revenue regulations of Aurangzib, his two Hindu historians Bhimsen Burhanpuri and Iswardas Nagar, and other miscellaneous topics Jadunath established himself as an essayist. His *Mughal Administration* (1920)[22] which broke a new ground was the first of its kind for a long time. It is a scholarly analysis of Mughal civil administration, its basic principles, position of the emperor, various departments and their heads, provincial administration, revenue policy and finally a philosophical survey of Mughal rule—its achievements and failures. His characterisation of Mughal administration as "the Perso-Arabic system in Indian setting[23] is historically true and even today it holds the ground. Jadunath's *House of Shivaji* (1940) is a supplement to his *Shivaji And His Times.*[24] It is a collection of essays on Shahji, Shivaji and Shambhuji, one or two Mughal topics like Prince Akbar and Aurangzib's letters and four Maratha historians. The work is useful for research scholars. In *India Through The Ages* (1928) his style reached "the supreme point of condensation". Four distinct facets of Indian culture—Aryan, Buddhist, Islamic and British—and their basic tenets have been analysed and discussed. This telescopic work reveals the author's command over the subject, broadness of vision and scholarship.

Jadunath contributed four chapters to the *Cambridge History of India* (Volume IV, 1937, Chapters VII, X, XI, XIII) and edited a huge collection of official papers, the *Poona Residency Correspondence* (Volumes I, VII, XIV, 1930, 1945, 1949), translated into English *Persian Records of Maratha history* (two volumes) (1952), edited *Ain-i-Akbari* (Volmes II-III, 1950, 1948) and edited and translated *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri*

(Anecdotes of Aurangzib) (1912) and *Maasar-i-Alamgiri* (A history of Aurangzib Alamgir) (1947). His most important edited work is *History of Bengal* (Volume II, 1948) of which two-fifths were his own contribution. He broke virgin soil in respect of the viceroyalties of Prince Shuja, Shaista Khan and Murshid Quli Khan.[25] In the uncharted wilderness of medieval Bengal Jadunath acted as a safe guide and path-finder by virtue of his unrivalled mastery of Persian manuscript sources and European records. His penetrating intellect makes the Bar Bhuiyans (twelve landlords) come down from their undeserving position of national heroes and Sirajuddaulah loses much of his legendary fame as the champion of Bengal's independence. Poets and dramatists[26] had to yield to the scientific historian as earlier in the domain of Mughal history Masum, Aquil Khan and Khafi Khan, Elliot and Dowson had to make room for him. Besides his three minor but scholarly studies of *Shivaji —A study in leadership* (1949), *Bengal Nawabs* (a study of sources) (1952) and *History of the Dasnami sect* in two volumes, Jadunath's important work in his last years is *Military History of India* (1960). It contains altogether twenty three articles on the evolution of the art of war in India. It begins with a discussion on how geography dictates strategy and then traces the evolution from Alaxander's battle with Poros down to Baji Rao I's palkhed campaign (1727-28). In addition to a note on the army of the Mughals, it has two appendices on Maratha military system and elephantry. The importance of the work lies in its being the first of its kind in India. The treatment is scholarly and sources are both secondary and original. Lastly, Jadunath contributed a large number of historical articles to contemporary journals and newspapers.[27]

N. K. Sinha tells us[28] that Jadunath sought help, guidance and light on obscure points from William Irvine. He admired Irvine's practice of bringing light to bear on the subject from every possible angle, and his judgment of evidence. Jadunath himself acknowledged with gratitude the help and guidance he received from Irvine.[29] His study of *Aurangzib*, *Shivaji* and *Fall* is unparalleled in Indian historiography because of the huge mass of materials he brought to bear on the subject. A

remarkably energetic man, he collected raw materials for his subject in eight languages—Persian, Marathi, Hindi, Sanskrit, English, French, Dutch and Portuguese ; carefully sifted and collated them, arranged methodically the matters of fact and then wrote his history. Temperamentally and by rigid training in the technique of historical research Jadunath was not the man to accept any source of information at its face value. He accepted materials only after carefully establishing through comparative method the historicity and authenticity of them beyond reasonable doubt. Further, he verified his materials from all other possible sources so that no gap or lacuna was left in his studies.[30] Again, to him must go the credit of discovering many an original source of Mughal history.[31]

Jadunath made use of about ten categories of sources—official histories, private histories, monographs touching only particular episodes and personages of the times, Court bulletins, letters of the actors, collection of anecdotes, accounts of European travellers and contemporary records of the European settlements, provincial histories and Imperial Gazetteers. A lesser mind than Jadunath's would have foundered on the rock of bewildering mass of confused materials and lost way in the misty jungle of unusually complicated later Mughal history. But Jadunath ploughed his way safely through this huge collection of materials, throwing light on their contents from other sources and correctly interpreting and dating them for the benefit of future historians. Conscientious and true to his craft, he would not write a single line before dates, textual reading and arrangement of manuscripts have been correctly ascertained. He practically revolutionised the technique of historical research in India. What G. P. Gooch had said about Ranke may be said about him too :

> "When he began to write, historians of high repute believed memoirs and chronicles to be primary authorities. When he laid down his pen, every scholar with a reputation to make or to lose had learned to content himself with nothing less than the papers and correspondence of the actors themselves and those in immediate contact with the events they describe."[32]

Far more difficult and baffling in nature is the correct and appropriate interpretation of materials. In this sphere also Jadunath stood his ground well. With the impartiality and detachment of a scientific historian he succeeded to a remarkable extent in keeping the study of the past from the passions of the present, founded historical construction on contemporary sources and established and developed the science of evidence by the analysis of authorities and comparative method.[33] He followed in the footsteps of Ranke in his study of the mind and personality of contemporary writers who happened to be the source of original knowledge. He favoured liberal and honest interpretation of historical materials.

Armed with a sober judgment, creative imagination and a critical knowledge of the sources, Jadunath entered on his narrative. His study of *Aurangzib*, *Shivaji* and *Fall*, a trilogy, is full of fascinating sketches of individuals. These are vivid and accurate. His narration of events reveals his mastery of the art and his treatment of battles is still unsurpassed in Indian historiography. His analytical faculty is powerful and penetrating. Each of these points may be illustrated by appropriate quotation. As to his portrayal of individual character, two examples may suffice.

"Dara was a loving husband, a doting father, and a devoted son ; but as a ruler of men in troubled times he must have been a failure. Long continued prosperity had unnerved his character and made him incapable of planning wisely, daring boldly and achieving strenuously—or if need were, of wresting victory from the jaws of defeat by desperate efforts or heroic endurance. The darling of the court was utterly out of his element in the camp."[34]

of Mir Jumla he writes :

"His character shone with supreme radiance in this enterprise (Kutch Bihar and Assam Campaign). He did nothing which does not reflect the highest credit on him. No other general of that age conducted war with so much humanity and justice nor kept his soldiers, private and captains alike, under such discipline ; no other general could have retained to the last the confidence and even affection of his subordi-

nates amidst such appalling sufferings and dangers...with a hero like Mir Jumla, the rhetoric of the historian Talish Ceases to be extravagance, his eulogy is not fulsome flattery but homage deservedly paid to a born king of men."[35]

One royal prince with his strong and weak points and one brilliant lieutenant of Aurangzib come to life in the pages of history. The following will illustrate Jadunath's narrative art,

"The frightened women roused the Nawab, but before he could use his weapons Shivaji was upon him and severed his thumb with one stroke of his sword. It was evidently at this time that lamps in the room were put out by some wise woman".[36]

Jadunath's treatment of battles is unique in Indian history. He brilliantly set the stage of the battles with a full account of their topography and terrain ; then followed a minute characterisation of principal actors, description of their forces, deployment, points of strength and weakness, actual operations, results of encounter, and appraisal of generalship and finally a verdict from the historian given with the terseness of a philosopher. His presentation of the battles of Dharmat, Samugarh, Panipat, Patan, Merta, Laswari and Assaye is still unrivalled. It is, according to some, better than that of many celebrated military historians.[37] In his treatment of battles Jadunath really created something new and as N. K. Sinha puts it, "all this is so very different from the shallow, slovenly treatment of military history by all other Indian historians.[38] Jadunath's analysis is of a high order. The following is an illustration :

"A strenuous reign of fifty years ends in colossal failure. And yet this king was one of the greatest rulers of Asia in intelligence, character, and enterprise. He was, in an extraordinary degree, hard-working, active, moral, and inspired by the sense of duty. He denied himself pleasure and repose, steeled his heart against the seductions of the senses and the appeals of pity and human weakness, and governed his people according to the best ideals of his age and creed. And yet the result of fifty years of strong and good administration by this puritan in the purple was the

hopeless breaking up of his empire...the invisible cause of his failure lay in his character and past deeds."[39]

In his historical studies Jadunath does not seem to have followed any pre-conceived theory or notion, a particular pattern or system of thought. A close scrutiny of his writings reveals his liking for the Rankean principle "the past as it actually was" (wie es eigentlich gewesen)[40], but he was not a blind follower of Ranke or his method. The German historian was dogmatically against pronouncing any judgment, making any generalisation or offering any hypothesis while the Indian firmly asserted that 'the historian must be a judge' of events and personalities.[41] Jadunath admired the Rankean principle of objectivity, accuracy of details and impartiality but he did not fully accept that system. Jadunath was biased, but it was a bias which is another name for opinion.[42] It was not prejudice, mental fixation, racial or communal feeling and as such it did not affect the basic structure of his historical writings. He was biased in favour of Aurangzib till he turned a bigot and persecutor of other religious faiths, Shivaji, Durgadas, Mahadji Sindhia, Ahmad Shah Abdali, Najibuddaulah and Najaf Khan. He was also biased in favour of Pax Britannica. He had a soft corner for Persian culture, its humane and tolerant outlook, language and literature, mysticism and Sufi Philosophy.[43] Conversely he was biased against Jaswant Singh, Nana Fadnis, the Chitpavan Brahmins and Balaji Baji Rao's policy in the north. Lastly, the critics point out that there is 'north orientation' in his works and that he had pro-Mughal bias.[44] This sort of bias is inevitable in historical writing and none can claim immunity from it. What is important is whether such bias for and against outstanding personalities and events distorts in a significant way the presentation and treatment of historical events. Nothing of the sort happened in the case of Jadunath. Admittedly he was well within permissible limits.

G.S. Sardesai, Jadunath's life-long friend, informs us that "Jadunath remarks very often that what taxes his brain most are style and presentation".[45] Jadunath makes that point clear in no uncertain terms in his numerous articles and private talks with his pupils.[46] It is needless to emphasize that

his writing is among the finest of its kind in Indian historiography. He developed a graceful, balanced and poignant style. With an eye for the picturesque he wielded his facile pen in an ever-flowing, simple way. He avoided verbosity embellishment or ornamentalism and liked terseness of expression.[47] Another peculiarity of his style is that he often refreshed 'the subject by adding apt quotations and appropriate illustrations from world history and literature'.[48] As the historian is not only a scientist but also an artist his aim was to make history readable, attractive and fascinating, not dry as dust. His polished style and language infused life and freshness into the dry bones of Mughal history. An illustration from his fall will make the point clear :

> "The Mughal empire fell because of the rotteness at the core of Indian society. This rottenness showed itself in the form of military and political helplessness. The country could not defend itself ; the royalty was hopelessly depraved and imbecile ; the nobles were selfish and short-sighted ; corruption, inefficiency and treachery disgraced all branches of the public service. In the midst of this decay and confusion, our literature art and even true religion had perished."[49]

As regards the method he followed Jadunath himself has given an indication of it in his writings. He has referred to objective scientific manner[50] and accuracy in recording events. He has high regard for Ranke's objectivity, critical and comparative scholarship, though he does not like his obsession with detachment. His methodology has the following characteristic features, (i) use of contemporary original sources, (ii) mastery of the language of the original authorities, (iii) a study of the mind and personality of those who happen to be the source of original knowledge, (iv) verification of all sources by comparison with the testimony of other writers, v) verification through other categories of sources, vi) use of all possible sources of information. Lastly, the historian, in order to be equal to the challenging task, must have 'originality of thinking and organic coordination of parts'.

Jadunath holds the view that the study of history has some

practical usefulness. "Light of our father's experience is indispensably necessary for guiding aright the steps of those who would rule the destinies of our people in the present".[51] The Study of the past is useful because it helps solve the present problems and acts as a guide for the future. In order to find out true solutions to the problems of modern India and avoid the pitfalls of the past the Indian must study "the head-long decay of the age-old Muslim rule in India and the utter failure of the last Hindu attempt at empire building by the new-sprung Marathas".[52] Secondly, Jadunath believes in in the idea of progress, a legacy of the late nineteenth-century English historical ideas. Law of progress is, in his eyes, a law of life and a rule of the living world.[53] A keen student of western historical ideas, he is aware of Darwinian ideas particularly neo-Darwinism and their impact on historical thinking. Thirdly, he believes that Divinity plays some part in human affairs, "History when rightly read is a justification of providence, a revelation of a great purpose fulfilled in time".[54] Essentially an ethical and religious man in the modern sense of the term,[55] he seems to hold the view that history works itself out through Divine will and providence intervenes when it goes off the right track. On several occasions he refers to divine justice. The historian saw the vindication of divine justice when Ghulam Qadir, that monster of bloody tragedy (1788) and his accomplice Manzur Ali were done to death by Mahadji Sindhia and again when Jaswant Rao Holkar's troops laid waste the country around Poona.[56] Fourthly, he equates destiny, fate, nemesis with the totality of human action which is another name for character. An invisible and inexorable fate drags Aurangzib on to his tragic end. Here fate is the totality of Aurangzib's policy and conduct, in other words, his charaeter.[57] Again, "No man can rise above destiny... Destiny is only another name for character, and Shah Alam's character alone was responsible for the fate that now overwhelmed him and his house".[58] Finally, his conception of historical truth forms an integral part of his idea of history. "I would not care whether truth is pleasant or unpleasant, acceptable to the people or opposed to popular notion. I

would not care whether it hurts the national pride or not...I shall seek truth, understand truth, and accept truth. This should be the firm resolve of an historian".[59] This is perhaps the key-note of his philosophy of history.

The spirit of the age in which Jadunath lived and wrote (1870-1958) seems to have had its impact on his writings. Though a moderate all through his life and aloof from the hot-bed of politics, he could not but be affected by the ever-rising nationalist temperature. His *Economics of British India* seems to have been written under the impact of heat and passion generated by the Swadeshi movement in Bengal. K.R. Qanungo informs us that the work was intended to strike at the weakest point of the British Government and that extracts from this books were actually used by the militants to excite popular passions against the British.[60] Even in his magnum opus, *History of Aurangzib*, one can discern the impact of nationalism. The contemplative historian, while brooding over the significance of Aurangzib's reign, points out how an Indian nationality can be formed.

> "If India is ever to be the home of a nation able to keep peace within and guard the frontiers, develop the economic resources of the country and promote art and science, then both Hinduism and Islam must die and be born again."[61]

Jadunath was perhaps thinking in terms of an Indian nation but the ugly forces of communalism on both sides pained him and threw him into the role of a stern philosopher. He warned his countrymen that 'the history of Aurangzib must not be allowed to repeat itself and that both Hinduism and Islam must be purified by reason and science'. His Shivaji and Rajput hero Durgadas bear a tinge of nationalism though he is cautious and discreet in his presentation. He calls Durgadas 'the flower of Rathor Chivalry' and regards Shivaji as "the last great constructive genius and nation builder that the Hindu race has produced".[62]

Belonging to an older generation, Jadunath made very little use of allied disciplines like anthropology, sociology, economics and other social sciences which were developing very rapidly during his life time. One common charge against him is that

he neglected both economics and society in his study of the Mughals. Jadunath seems to have been quite aware of it as he himself writes :

> "A more serious defect is that the social and economic history of this long stretch of time has been crowded out of the present series, though I have made many short excursions into that field in my minor works and essays".[63]

His study is predominantly political and military in character, social, economic and cultural aspects are neglected. These only get his passing reference or shallow treatment at the end of the volume or in essays. A true victorian in spirit and mind, Jadunath extols thousand virtues and blessings of Pax Britannica which sometimes shakes the lofty ethical and moral standard of the historian of which he was a professed champion. It would have been better had he been a little more discreet and reserved about the British rule. The establishment of British rule in India was, in his opinion, the beginning of a glorious dawn, the like of which the history of the world has not seen elsewhere.[64]

With all his faults Jadunath is still our greatest historian. He has been compared with Macaulay and Gibbon.[65] With Macaulay for his style and with Gibbon for his 'Fall'. But in style Macaulay and Jadunath are poles apart. One writes in a verbose, rhetoric, complex and bold style and the other in a temperate, terse and simple language. Neither can be compared with Gibbon, for their works are quite dissimilar except in names. One is a highly moral and philosophical work, written in the spirit of eighteenth-century rationalism, and the other is a critical scientific history, written in the critical and analytical climate of the twentieth-century. If he is to be compared at all with any master of the past, he is more akin to Ranke than to any other luminary of the bygone age. He accepted Ranke's attitude to sources but rejected his idea of detachment. Like Ranke in Germany he is beyond doubt the greatest historian of India. He is one of the first in India to initiate the scientific study of materials, digging down to the very roots of original sources. He possessed in an unrivalled degree the judicial temper which is the hall-mark of a successful

historian. He sustained endeavour, power of work and long-life enabled him to produce a large number of first rate historical works. No other Indian historian can stand comparison with him in this respect. In Indian historiography he is without a peer among his countrymen, a master-craftsman, a combination of critical scholarship and creative historical writing.

II

P. Geyl in his *Debates with historians* wrote—

"History can not be conceived, and it can not be written or communicated, except from a point of view, conditioned by the circumstances of the historian."[66]

The views of historians are influenced by contemporary political circumstances or considerations. This is one of the inevitable limitations of history and historical writing. Born with this inherent limitation Govind Sakharam Sardesai grew up among a people who recalled nostalgically their good old days of glory and empire. And loss of political supremacy in the recent past rankled in the hearts of many a patriotic soul of Maharashtra. The memory of the empire was still vivid and fresh. Sardesai was destined to serve a Prince whose ancestors were prominent partners of the Maratha confederacy. They also played a role in the making of that glory and empire. The social and cultural milieu in Maharashtra generated in him a strong patroitic-nationalist feeling and outlook. Though not a trained historian, Sardesai was an insatiable reader 'gifted with tremendous power for work and concentration.' But the Baroda Court atmosphere where he spent the best years of his life was not at all congenial for any serious study and research.[67] His teaching assignment in the place as the tutor of the young princes initiated him into the study of history. Later in life 'history got full possession of him. He had hardly any interest in life other than history and historians.'

Sardesai's autobiography in Marathi[68] gives details of his early life which was reared up amidst extreme hardship and unfavourable conditions. He was born at Hasol in the Ratna-

giri district of Maharashtra state on 17th May, 1865. Though his family surname is Mavalankar, he is commonly known as Sardesai as it was the name of the office held by his ancestors. Having matriculated from the Ratnagiri High School, Sardesai went to Fergusson College, Poona, for higher studies and ultimately graduated from the Elphinstone College, Bombay, in 1888. Next year he was appointed a reader and personal clerk of the Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad of Baroda. From 1889 to 1925 he had been in the Baroda service, first as a reader and clerk to the Maharaja, then as a tutor to the royal princes and finally as an official in charge of Maharaja's personal accounts. From 1925 to 1959 his sole pre-occupation was the history of the Marathas.

Being trained in the school of adversity in his early life, Sardesai became a man of strong nerves and personality. Wide travel in India and abroad as a member of the royal party properly equipped him for the role of a nationalist historian. He applied himself whole heartedly to his chosen task of telling the story of his own people from their point of view and made strenuous efforts to rise to the level of an historian. With remarkable humility he does not claim himself to be a scholar or even a trained historian. He calls himself only 'a tireless worker and an ardent seeker after knowledge'.[69] This genuine seeker after knowledge, however, developed a pan-Indian viewpoint in discussing all questions of the past and present. 'He was as familiar with the trend of thought in North India as in his native Maharashtra.'[70] The grand design of writing the entire history of the Maratha people from Shahji to Baji Rao II's fall was carried to completion with consummate skill, tenacity and scholarship. Like his near-contemporary Jules Michelet of France, he is perhaps our greatest nationalist historian.

Sardesai's total contribution to historical scholarship may be studied under three heads, (1) major historical works in English and Marathi, (2) edited works of source materials in English and Marathi and (3) translated works in Marathi. His life's work is his *New History of the Marathas* in three volumes (1946-48). The theme is the history of the Marathas from Shahji to fall. The first volume, *Shivaji and his line*, traces the

history from 1600 to 1707. It goes straight into the question of the origin of the Marathas and their consolidation under Shahji whom he has compared with the emperor Shah Jahan in the north.[71] Then he brings in the epoch-maker Shivaji, his exploits and achievements. The remaining three chapters of the volume bring the story down, from Shivaji's death to Aurangzib's demise and the triumph of what M. G. Ranade calls the Maratha war of independence. The second volume, *Expansion of the Maratha Power, 1707-1772*, takes the story from Shahu's accession right upto the death of Madhav Rao I, the greatest of the Peshwas. The theme of Maratha civil war (1707-1713) between Shahu and Rajaram's widow Tarabai has been considerably played down and dismissed with only two pages of narration.[72] The expansionist policy of Balaji Vishwanath and his illustrious son Baji Rao I receives the approbation of the historian who sees in it the fulfilment of the role the Marathas were destined to play in the eighteenth-century Indian politics. But this triumphant phase was very short lived. Balaji Rao's tactless handling of north Indian affairs and lack of policy sadden him immeasurably. In a separate chapter (ix) he deals with the Maratha penetration into Bengal (1742-51) but considerably plays down the atrocities, cruelties and violence of the Maratha raids which caused much suffering and devastation in Bengal.[73] He discusses in some detail the Maratha policy in the north, the tactical blunder and the tragedy at Panipat (1761). Panipat, he tells us, was not a great disaster, it was only a temporary eclipse, not a mortal blow to the Maratha power. In fact between 1761 and 1772, the historian tells us, the Marathas were once more dominant in the north. The volume closes with the tragic death of the promising young peshwa Madhav Rao I. The third volume, *Sunset over Maharashtra*, tells the tragic story of the Maratha downfall (1772-1847). It narrates the story of Maratha decline, occasional flickering glow of the dying power (Mahadji Sindhia's dictatorship in the North), the British challenge, Maratha response and ultimate collapse. The author has boldly dealt with Maratha demoralisation, disintegration, treachery and intrigue, mutual jealousy, suspicion and hatred,

resultant Civil War and fall. The Maratha independence is gone. The study is concluded with a discussion on the causes of the Maratha downfall. In the third volume the historian is perhaps at his best. The scholarship is mature and the judgment balanced.

Main Currents of Maratha History (1926 ; Patna University Readership Lectures) is a supplementary study to *New History*. In altogether seven lectures the entire gamut of Maratha history has been surveyed (Maharashtradharma, historical research in Maharashtra, Shivaji, Chauth, Sardeshmuki etc., expansion of the Maratha power, clash with the Muslim rulers, relation between Nana and Majadji and causes of the fall). It is in the form of a running criticism of the principal actors and events of Maratha history.[74] For his royal pupils Sardesai wrote *twelve volumes of Riyasat* in Marathi, two for the Muslim period (1898), two for the British (1923, 1939), and eight for the Maratha period (1902-1932). The four volumes devoted to Muslim and British periods are decidedly based on secondary sources and as such cannot be considered as works of original scholarship. As regards *Marathi Riyasat*, Sardesai tried to bring together the scattered, disorganised and uncalendared mass of historical materials and opinions found in Marathi. He claims to have compared them with the available materials in other languages but this claim appears to be doubtful as he had no knowledge of European languages except English. He also did not know Persian, another great source of Maratha history.[75] Still his *Marathi Riyasat* is incomparably better than his *Musalmani and British Riyasat*. As Jadunath Sarkar puts it, "it is a painstaking and accurate compilation and guide to sources ; but lacks knowledge of all original sources except Marathi. Valuable for the history of literature, religion and noble families".[76] This is a just and balanced estimate of his *Marathi Riyasat*.

Of his edited works of source materials the most important are five volumes of *Poona Residency Correspondence* (vols II, VI, VII, XII, XIII) and forty five volumes of *Selections from Peshwa Daftar*. In addition, he brought out a volume of original documents (1924) and the *Aitihasik Patra Vyavahara*

(historical correspondence) (1933). Though his edited source-volumes contain some errors of date and wrong sequence of events, these are surely works of undoubted merit and scholarship. There is no reason to minimise their importance, as some scholars have done,[77] but at the same time it would be too much to claim that his 'works compare well with those of Mommsen on Roman history'.[78] At the instance of his master Sayaji Rao Gaekwad Sardesai translated Machiavelli's *Prince* in Marathi as *Rajdharma* (1890) and Seeley's *Expansion of England* as *England Deshachar Vistar* (1893).

As Sardesai aimed at giving out the Maratha side of the affair, 'a true apologia (Kaifiyat) of the Maratha people".[79] in his history, it is quite natural that he should depend mainly on the Marathi sources. In a letter to his friend Jadunath Sarkar Sardesai wrote,

> "your angle of vision is not the same as mine. I started entirely from the point of view of the Marathas as an independent entity".[80]

He claims to have made a *critical study* of the rise and fall of the modern Maratha state.[81] But this claim, on a close scrutiny, appears to be far-fetched, The first volume of his *New History* is based mainly on Marathi sources. He has freely drawn upon the *Bakhars* whose reliability or otherwise has not yet been established.[82] He has also used Dutch, French and Portuguese secondary sources and works of his celebrated predecessors in the field—Grant Duff, M. G. Ranade, Jadunath Sarkar and Surendranath Sen. So far as the English sources are concerned, he seems to have consulted the original documents of the European travellers. Manucci and Thevenot have been occasionally referred to in his work. The second volume stands primarily on Marathi and Persian sources. As he had no knowledge of Persian he depended on others for information and interpretation.[83] Evidently he has consulted Persian documents published in the Persian calendar (Imperial Records Department). In the third volume he has made an extensive use of the records of the Peshwa office (Selections from Peshwa Daftar), Poona Residency correspondence, Forbes' Oriental Memoirs, Forrest's Maratha Series, Secret Committee's Report,

and the Maratha state papers. In the last volume the historian seems to stand on a surer ground.

Jadunath Sarkar writes that "eternal vigilance in self-criticism has been the saving salt of his writings".[84] This a compliment from a life-long friend, not a critical estimate of his craftsmanship. In the interpretation of sources Sardesai was guided by his strong common sense and not by any method known to modern historical science—comparative, critical or analytical. The result is that his interpretation has been influenced by his strong personal bias in favour of his people.[85] One does not get from him critical, scientific and objective history which his friend so competently produced.

Sardesai was not a narrative artist nor his analytical power was of a high order He knew that powerful narration and penetrating analysis are essential parts of historical writing. All through his career of authorship he tried to develop and improve his power of narration and analysis. On this point he acted on the advice of his friend.[86] Jadunath advised him to read the works of Europen mastercraftsmen which he did to his great advantage. Thc following is an illustration of his narrative art :

> "Shivaji was manifestly a highly gifted personality, ready to meet any danger, always possessing supreme self-confidence, at once stern and kind-hearted, an ideal king of the type which Kalidasa has immortalized in his famous discription of Dilip".[87]

The narration is smooth, easy and simple. Reference to mythical lore adds charm to his portrait. Next follows an instance of his analysis,

> "Shivaji succeeded not only in establishing his own independence, but also in bringing about the necessary solidarity among the scattered warring elements of his home land, so that the Marathas were transformed into a nation and a power of the first rank in Indian politics."[88]

He is at ease in the depiction of individual personality. The following is his pen-portrait of Wellesley,

> "Possessed by an inordinate ambition to increase the greatness of his country, he (Wellesley) combined in himself

indomitable courage, intense love of power and the supreme gift of choosing able instruments and exercised imperious authority by compelling his subordinates to submit to his will. Thus he proved perhaps the greatest pro-consul among the British rulers of India".[89]

Taking his cue from the ardent nationalist outlook of Goldwin Smith,[90] Sardesai set out to write the history of his people and his professed aim was 'to point out the good or the bright side of the picture as the Western writers had sufficiently described the dark side'.[91] Sardesai, however, did not follow any definite pattern, fixed ideas, any model or laws of history. Possibly he was aware of the idea of the people shaping its own history. There is no doubt that he gave a romantic touch to the history of the Marathas. And as usual in the case of romantic historians, Sardesai went beyond the limits of balanced historical judgment in extolling the Maratha national rule and national heroes. Here is an instance, "Compared with their Muslim predecessors, the Marathas in general proved more efficient and clever in the art of administration".[92] His portrait of Shivaji was inspired by Carlyle's idea of heroes as kings.[93] Sometimes emotion and sentiment cloud his judgment while at other times he is surprisingly clear-sighted. For example his verdict on Shivaji's dealings with the Morays of Javali may be cited. "History will certainly pronounce an adverse judgement upon Shivaji's dealings with the Morays".[94] Sardesai appears to be biased against the English and the Muslim rule in India.[95] His appraisal of the Muslim rule is less than fair. He is prejudiced against Raghunath Rao and his son Baji Rao II and sympathetic towards Balaji Visawanath and his son Baji Rao I. He is an admirer of Mahadji Sindhia whom he calls the last great Maratha chieftain. As regards Nana Fadnis, he is a stern and impartial judge.

Style and presentation was a constant problem with Sardesai. He was aware of his deficiency in this aspect of historical writing. His knowledge of world history and literature was poor compared with that of his illustrious friend. However, with limited knowledge and reading he wrote in a style which is not below the standard of average Indian his-

torian of his times. In course of time he came to develop a graceful, simple style which served his purpose well. Style is a very personal expression of a writer's way of feeling. As he felt very strongly about his people his style became natural expression of his feeling. It is crisp and eminently readable.

Sardesai does not seem to be interested in the methodology of history.[96] As he was not an academically trained historian, he had no idea of different methods of historical investigation. 'He went on writing as he collected materials'. In the light of new sources he revised his works for later editions. Sardesai, however, knew fundamentals of methodology even if he had no idea of details. As he writes "A purely historical mind should be as impartial and analytical as a chemist's is in treating a piece of charcoal or diamond".[97] Sometimes one gets from him a flash of insight into the fundamentals of historiography. "A study of history", writes Sardesai, "means search for truth ; and truth is never one-sided"[98] It would not be possible for the Marathas, he felt, to write a complete history from their own Marathi papers only. At most they will show only one side of the picture. To complete the picture they must go to other sources. Though not a trained mind, Sardesai, however, was endowed with the insight and constructive vision of a true historian.

Like many contemporary Indian historians Sardesai holds a pragmatic conception of history. Let the historian speak for himself ; "the true function of history is to impart wisdom of the past for the benefit of the present".[99] The history of the Marathas imparts 'a political lesson which India sorely needs to-day'. Sardesai, however, does not believe in the simple theory of causation and sees in history 'the play of the contingent and unforeseen'. He approvingly quotes H.A.L. Fisher's famous dictum that history is full of contingencies and unforeseen developments. It can not be simply explained in terms of a theory of causation. As he puts it, "Human destinies often come to be shaped in a manner which can not be always accounted for on the theory of causation. In their development one has to recognise 'the play of the contingent and the unforeseen".[100] Next, he appears to have been influenced by

the idea of evolution and progress. Life is an organic growth, it moves on and never stands still. "Life", Sardesai explains, "moves on the principle of growth, we never stand still."[101] Further, he sees the role of Providence in human affairs.[102] Divinity intervenes in human affairs when it is felt necessary. Shivaji's inner voice, Devi Bhavani, came to his help in times of need.[103] It appears that he has a belief in the role of individual in history. "one earnest leader can change the character of a whole nation".[104] But he does not minimise "the sacrifices and services of hundreds and thousands of minor persons contributing their quota to the main current of history".[105] Lastly, the historian, in a reflective mood, gives his well-judged view that an individual is largely an architect of of his own character and personality. 'Man is as he has made himself; man will be as he will make himself'. This plain truth, Sardesai tells us is the essence of all history.[106]

The age of Sardesia (1865-1959) left deep impact on his thinking and writing. The first quarter of this century saw the growth of militant nationalism in the making of which his native Maharashtra played a conspicuous role.[107] Sardesia could not but be influenced by this strong nationalist ferment. Above all, he was writing a national history of the Marathas.[108] The *New History of the Marathas* has been the brain child of a nationalist historian who did not care much for historical objectivity or the science of history. The resurgent nationalist feeling in Maharashtra is adequately reflected in his writings. In fact, his urge to write came mainly from the Maharashtrian nationalist egotism which sought satisfaction in a national history. Sardesai himself was quite aware of the prevailing nationalist trend in historical writing. He knew that the Maratha historians were emotionally involved in the subject of their study. He gave his considered view that it would be difficult for them to represent facts truly and avoid prejudiccs.[109]

Sardesai did not go beyond Marathi and English sources in his search for truth which, according to him, is the true definition of history. He was aware that a research scholar in Indian history must be equipped with the knowledge of English

Sanskrit and Persian.[110] But unfortunately he knew only English and a little Sanskrit besides his mother tongue. Secondly, like his friend Sardesai also did not make use of the Social Sciences—economics, sociology, anthropology and auxiliary disciplines of historical studies—epigraphy, numismatics and archaeology, which were developing very rapidly during his life-time. In his work one does not find the social history of Maharashtra nor does one get an account of the economic condition of the people. Cultural history has also been left out. Sardesai is, however, quite aware of this shortcoming. "What we are doing at present mainly concerns political transactions; social and economic spheres have hardly yet been touched.[111] Elsewhere he admits that the Marathi papers contain 'an enormous amount of useful matter about social, religious, literary, military, industrial, judicial and other topics'.[112] But these have hardly been used in his work. Sardesai himself is conscious of his limitations as historian. He makes it clear that it is not the long sighed for 'masterly history' of the Marathas,[113] complete in all aspects. It is just the beginning of a serious study, a spade-work, Next, Sardesia never gives judgement or verdict[114] on a personality or event. He only cites opinions of others and leaves it to the reader to form his own estimate. Three plausible reasons for this seem to be the Rankean maxim, lack of self-confidence and lack of time for calm judgement. Lastly, legends and myths find place in his history. Without critical, comparative and scientific scrutiny legends and myths can not be made part of history. Sardesai appears to have violated this basic principle of the science of history.

Notwithstanding his limitations Sardesai occupies a prominent place in modern Indian historiography as the only Indian historian who has given us a connected history of the Maratha people (1600-1848) on a comprehensive scale. Inspite of its limitations as a scientific and critical history, *New History of the Marathas* will go down as the labour of love of a searching nationalist historian bent upon painting the bright side of the Maratha national character.[115] Tireless striving after accuracy, passion for going down to the root of things,

and unfailing common sense in interpretation have marked his historical works.[116] Both Sardesai and Michelet had a hard lot in childhood, both had a passionate love for the people, a faith in the role of Providence and the contribution of the masses to civilisation. But in intellect, scholarship and style Michelet is much superior to him. There is, however, one striking similarity between the two. G. P. Gooch writes of Michelet, "No historian has loved France so tenderly. To him that loved, much may be forgiven."[117] No historian has loved Maharastra more than Sardesai. So his greatest shortcoming, passionate love for the country and people, may be forgiven because of his devotion, life-creating imagination, sincerity and honesty in the use of original sources, indefatigable industry and unfailing loyalty to the Muse of history.

III

"We believe in the unity of History; it is one of our cardinal creeds", so wrote Surendranath Sen whose idea of history is total and comprehensive, embracing the whole range of human experience and the entire field of human activities.[118] History is not only political, military or institutional, it is also economic, social, cultural, religious, literary and artistic.[119] Having caught the contagion of the Swadeshi movement in the prime of his youth,[120] Surendranath grew up in the midst of a nationalist atmosphere which left an indelible imprint on his personality and intellectual life. The lesson in history and the use of original documents he got from his illustrious teacher and Principal, R. B. Ramsbotham,[121] an expert on post-plassey land revenue history of Bengal. Inspiring encouragement and intellectual stimulus came from Sir Asutosh Mukherjee who made arrangement for the specialised study of Sikh, Maratha and Rajput history in the newly opened post-graduate History Department of the University of Calcutta. Young Surendranath who enjoyed the patronage of the great educationist[122] was drafted into the post-graduate department as lecturer in Maratha history. History of the Marathas was his first-love, though he made scholarly excur-

sions into various and wide fields of modern Indian history. Inspiration and enthusiasm also continued to flow from his gifted colleagues, D. R. Bhandarkar, H. C. Raychoudhuri, R. C. Majumdar and others. Nobody was in doubt in the first quarter of the present century that India was striding ahead towards self-government and that Indian history must stand on an unchallengeable footing of original sources. The band of gifted men Asutosh collected for this purpose included Surendranath Sen.[123]

Surendranath belonged to a middle-class Vaidya family of Barisal (Bangladesh). Born in 1890, he took his M.A. degree in History from the Dacca College (then affiliated to the University of Calcutta) in 1915. After a short teaching term at the Robertson College, Jabalpur, (Madhya Pradesh) he joined the post-graduate History Department of the University of Calcutta in 1917. In 1939 he was appointed the Keeper of Records in the Imperial Records Department and after independence he was made the Director of National Archives. Then he joined the University of Delhi as Professor of History and finally retired as its Vice-Chancellor. After retirement he served the University of Wisconsin (U.S.A.) for sometime as visiting professor. That was his last intellectual assignment in life.

Surendranath's works may be divided into four categories (1) major works, (2) minor works, (3) edited and translated works and (4) history books in Bengali. His three major works are *Administrative system of the Marathas* (1923), *Military system of the Marathas* (1958) and *Eighteen Fifty-seven* (1957). Surendranath's study of the *Administrative system of the Marathas* from original sources is the first of its kind in Maratha history and the work still remains unrivalled. It is divided into four books. Book I gives an account of the Maratha administration from the rise of Shivaji to the accession of Shahu (Central Government, Ashta Pradhan Council, revenue and financial policy, organisation of the military and naval affairs and administration of justice and education). For want of materials many other aspects of the administration under Shivaji have been left untouched.[124] Book II deals with the Maratha administration under the Peshwas, from Shahu to fall

(1818). It gives an intimate picture of village administration, district and provincial administrative machinery, imperial secretariat, revenue administration, social regulations, prison and police and administration of justice. Book III traces the antiquity of the Maratha institutions and points out "the intimate relation between the actual practices of the Maratha Government and the theories laid down by old Hindu political thinkers.[125] His conclusion is that many of the Maratha institutions were nothing but relics of the Hindu age.[126] In Book IV he sums up the contributions of Islam and the Muslim administration to the evolution of the Maratha system. The influence of the Muhammedan administration is discernible in revenue policy and administration, taxation, military organisation, Ashta Pradhan Council, particularly its earlier Persian designations, police organisation and designations of various Maratha officials. Shivaji, however, was not a slavish imitator of the Mughal system. Taking many administrative principles of the Mughals he built up a system of his own. Surendranath finally concludes that the whole Maratha administrative system "was a happy combination of Hindu and Muhammedan institutions".[127] He also makes it clear that the Marathas were not mere robbers and plunderers but founders of a good government.[128] Rejecting Tone's characterisation of the Peshwa's system of administration as military republic,[129] Surendranath calls it a "curious combination of democracy and feudal autocracy".[130] And his view on the point still holds the ground.

Surendranath's *Military System of the Marathas*, again first of its kind and still unmatched, is a complementary study to the *Maratha Administrative System*. His aim was to explain the real causes that led to the decline and decay of the Maratha empire.[131] It examines in some detail Shivaji and his system, Chauth and Sardeshmukhi—their origin and later orientation, revival of feudalism after Shivaji, infantry and cavalry, forts, artillery, European officers and trained battalions, the Maratha army in action—the third battle of Panipat and the Maratha navy. His thesis in the *Military System* is that the Maratha empire fell because its army declined; centralised national monarchy of Shivaji was replaced by decentralised feudal

despotism and its impact on Maratha military organisation was disastrous. There was no more any Central Maratha army. Indigenous elements were outnumbered by foreign mercenaries. Moreover, the Marathas failed to synthetize their traditional system of fighting with the newly introduced European method and modernise their army in the light of scientific inventions in the West. The result was the tragic fall of the once mighty Maratha empire.

Surendranath's *Eighteen Fifty-seven*, sponsored by the Government of India, is a "fresh review of the causes, character and consequences of the Sepoy War".[132] It is based, the historian tells us, on a dispassionate and objective study.[133] It is not a detailed history of the war but only a review of the main events.[134] He has surveyed the main storm-centres of the great saga of the mid-nineteenth century Indian history along with a scholarly analysis of its causes, character and consequences. The sociological origin and economic background of the revolt find no place in his study. He is mainly preoccupied with the political and military aspects of the problem. 'The grand sequence of popular movements goes unnoticed and unrepresented.'[135] His main thesis about *Eighteen Fifty-seven* may be summed up in his own words,

> "The movement of 1857 was not preplanned, it was not engineered by any political party of Indian or any foreign power hostile to England. It has its origin in the sepoy discontent and derived its strength from the wide spread disaffection among the civil population."[136]

He is very cautious about its character and makes only guarded comments,

> "The movement began as a military mutiny but it was not every where confined to the army. So it would be wrong to dismiss it as a mere military rising."[137]

Surendranath, however, was not prepared to call it a war of national independence. Outside Oudh and Shahabad it did not take the character of a national war.[138] What began as a fight for religion ended as a war of independence, but this independence, if achieved, would not have ensured freedom of the people. "The English Government had imperceptibly

effected a social revolution. The Mutiny leaders wanted to put the clock back. They wanted a counter-revolution."[139] The memory of 1857 had its impact on the ideology of militant nationalism which had discarded the discredited method of constitutional agitation of the early Congress and placed its faith in armed insurrection.[140]

Among his minor works are *Studies in Indian History* (1930), *Off the Main Track* (1944), *Early Career of Kanhoji Angria and Other Papers* (1941), *India through Chinese eyes* (1956), *Delhi and its Monuments* (1948), two learned articles *The Portuguese in Bengal* and *Writings on the Mutiny*[141] and a few stray papers contributed to the proceedings of the Indian Historical Records Commission. *Studies in Indian History* is a collection of incoherent articles on such widely dissimilar topics as Historical Records at Goa, Hinduism and Muhammedan heretics during the Pathan period, English Procurator at Shivaji's Court, the Karnatak Expedition, Hyder Ali's fleet, Shringeri letters of Tipu Sultan, Portuguese records on Hyder and Tipu, Appaji Pandit —a forgotten Maratha admiral and Marquis of Alorna's instructions to his successor.[142] All these papers are based on original sources; they help illuminate many dimly lit corners of Indian history and therefore may be rightly considered important addition to our knowledge of modern Indian history. Surendranath strayed out of the main track of general history, *Off the Main Track*, because he had a conviction that sometimes 'unimportant records throw unexpected light' on the social and economic condition of the country.[143] In eleven essays he has loitered in 'the by-lanes and blind alleys'. Except two essays, *Cornwallis and slave trade in Bengal* and *Some Police Problems in Old Calcutta*, the other nine are comparatively unimportant. *Early Career of Kanhoji Angria and Other Papers* is a collection of nineteen stray papers written at different times and over a period of ten years. The first nine papers relate to the Marathas, particularly the Angrias, and Portuguese account of Hyder Ali and the rest, except two Presidential addresses, deal with Bengal and Lord Auckland on Delhi. As these papers stand on unpublished sources they are of some value to the students of modern Indian history. *India through*

Chinese eyes is an account of the Chinese pilgrims who came to visit India, of the country and people they saw, scholars, poets and philosophers they met and of the system of education, Kings and Chronology of the times. Though the writer has disclaimed any originality for the work, it is scholarly, readable and informative. *Delhi and its Monuments* is not meant for scholars; it is a short popular account of the old monuments of Delhi intended for the general run of readers. A long article *The Portuguese in Bengal* gives an account of Portuguese penetration into Bengal through commerce and subordinate alliance and *Writings on the Mutiny* deals with its literature, theories and widely divergent views on the subject.

Mention should also be made of Surendranath's edited and translated works. He edited with long introduction *Indian Travels of Thevenot and Careri* (1949). The editor gives historical background of their travel, biographies of the travellers, an account of the seventeenth-century travellers and of what they saw in India. *Siva Chhatrapati* (1920) is a translation of three Marathi biographies of Shivaji (Krishnaji Anant Sabhasad's *biography of Shivaji*, extract from Malhar Ram Rao Chitnis's *Bakhar* and *Sivadigvijaya*). Translation is literal and accurate. This is supplemented by his edition and translation of *Foreign Biographies of Shivaji* (1927). This volume includes Portuguese, French, Dutch and English sources of Shivaji. Surendranath edited a *Collection of 169 Old Bengali letters* (Prachin Bangla Patra Sankalan) (1942) which throws light on the history and culture of the north-eastern part of India.[144] In addition to these, Surendranath also wrote a few history books in Bengali, of them *Asoka* is patently a popular account of the great emperor's career and achievements. *Peshwadiger Rashtra Sashan Paddhati* (Administrative system of the Peshwas) and *Hindu Gauraber Sesh Adhyay* (The last chapter of the glory of the Hindus) are evidently better than the first. His biography of *Aswini Kumar Dutta* (1923), the stormy petrel of the Swadeshi movement in Bengal,[145] is the homage he paid to the memory of that great patriotic leader whom it was his good fortune to see from close quarters.

With adequate scholarship and fairly good knowledge of

Marathi, Persian and Portuguese, Surendranath set out to study the institutional history of the Marathas. He marshalled his evidence with skill, energy and ingenuity and placed a fairly good historical documentation before his reader. In his *Administrative System* he relied primarily on Marathi and Portuguese sources and English factory records. Persian sources did not yield much on the subject of the secondary sources Major Jervis's *Geographical and Statistical Memoir of the Konkan*, Elphinstone, Malcolm, Duff, Ranade and Jadunath provided him with much valuable information. However the materials he consulted are by no means exhaustive and left much to be desired. In his more mature work, the *Military system* he is more thorough and particular in the use of original source materials. The work stands mainly on Marathi original sources supplemented by English, Portuguese, French and Dutch records. As regards the secondary sources, he used the accounts left by Tone and Smith and many printed works on the subject in English, Portuguese, French and Marathi. Manuscripts were consulted in London, Paris, Lisbon, Evora and Goa. Persian sources practically gave him nothing. Though he prepared his *Eighteen Fifty-seven* in less than a year and a half he managed to consult a wide range of manuscripts and published sources of the event. As the nature of the sources of the great event is one-sided,[146] he tried to balance it by searching idigenous sources. And in this respect he was not altogether unsuccessful. Apart from Indian and English secondary sources, he studied mutiny papers in English, Urdu, Persian and Hindi. He used state papers particularly Foreign, Home and Military Department Proceedings. Besides official records in India and abroad, he searched state archives for new information. Finally he took care to study almost all contemporary writings, Indian and English, on the subject. Despite his honest attempt, however, he could not manage to consult all the available sources of Eighteen Fifty-seven.[147]

Surendranath believed that the study of history and historical investigation demanded, among other things, intellectual integrity and devotion to truth.[148] With intellectual honesty and loyalty to truth, Surendranath set himself the task of

making a scientific synthesis of his sources of information and of giving a critical and objective interpretation to his materials. J. R. Hale writes that "a historian is seen at his best when he does not appear"[149] and Surendranath echoes the same when he speaks of self-effacement[150] on the part of an historian. It is, however, still a desideratum, a noble ideal yet to be achieved. Surendranath did his best to give his historical materials a dispassionate, impartial and honest interpretation. True to his Muse and the concept of scientific history,[151] he did not try to fit facts into any pre-conceived model or idea of history. Facts arranged and analysed by his trained mind, moral and ethical standard and exacting scholarship gave to his works a distinct stamp of their own.

It is generally held that the style should be always appropriate to the subject-matter. Though not a master of narrative art, Surendranath's narrative is appropriate to his theme. Institutional historian as he was, he writes in a simple, easy, supple style.[152] The directness with which he brings his subject home to the reader renders his works pleasant reading. His narrative does not tax the brain, but leaves an impression distinct and vivid. Here is an instance of his narrative art,

> "Shivaji was not the creator of a new system. He modified and reformed what he had inherited from his Hindu and Muhammedan predecessors. Every administrative system has its roots in the past and the Maratha system was by no means an exception."[153]

The point may be reinforced by the following lines from his *Eighteen Fifty-seven* "The Meerut outbreak was sudden and short-lived like a summer gale. It came without the least warning, caused tremendous havoc while it lasted and then subsided as quickly as it came."[154] The narration is appropriate, easy-flowing and yet creates an impression with a fine imagery. The following is an instance of his analytical power and historical insight—

> "The state degenerated from a national monarchy to a feudal confederacy, the army degenerated from a well-disciplined national force to an ill-disciplined band of mer-

cenaries, and the military leaders degenerated from simple hardy soldiers to ease-loving voluptuaries. There could be but one result of such a general-sided decline both moral and material."[155]

An allround degeneration of the Maratha state at the end of the eighteenth-century. The following pen-picture of Gonzales' character is another instance.

> "Gonzales had the making of a great leader, but his training and environments made of him a pirate of the lower type. For unrelieved cruelty and treachery his record had hardly any parallel, but with better education under more favourable circumstances, he might have been a Releigh or a Drake."[156]

This is a fair combination of analytical mind and imaginative understanding.

Though Surendranath approvingly refers to the scientific method of historiography of the great German savants of the nineteenth-century,[157] he did not follow any particular ideology or pre-set theory in his historical studies. Since his life's work was the study of the institutional history of the Marathas he fell in love with his subject and unconsciously shared their hopes and fears, pride and splendour. He seems to be aware of this common failing of human nature when he writes, "It may be that I have my unconscious bias for my own country and unconscious prejudice against the rest, but I have always tried not to indulge in any such feeling".[158] True, Surendranath was not consciously biased or prejudiced for or against any event, personality, policy, race or creed. Despite this detachment, however, he unconsciously lent his support to the cause of the Marathas and their institutions. As his aim was to disprove the biased theories of the imperialist historians, he could not maintain strict impartiality. His predilection is clear.

Surendranath, like many of his professional colleagues had a firm faith in critical and comparative method.[159] No source of information, he suggests, should be taken for granted. Raw materials of history are to be put to a rigorous test to ascertain their genuineness and historicity. Every source of

information, be it primary or secondary, coming from a traveller or an eye-witness should be accepted only after critical examination.[160] An historian, if he is true to his craft, 'must draw upon all possible and available sources of information, from state papers to contemporary writings, from foreigners' accounts to private records, from literary and archaeological source to epigraphic and numismatic evidence. Then he must isolate grain from the chaff and write history in an impersonal and objective spirit.[161] This, in short, sums up his views on historical methodology.

Surendranath takes a broad and philosophic view of history. History is a continuous, coherent, organic process. As he explains it, "history flows like a river from the forgotten past, to the unknown future".[162] Since an hisrorian's theme is vast, grand and ever-increasing, he refuses to take a narrow view of history and "Clip the wings of our Muse."[163] The past, present, and future are but links in an indissoluble chain of time, each influencing and being influenced by others.

> "The present is rooted in the past, the future is only a projection of the present ; as the past has left its indelible impress on the present, so the present is inevitably shaping the future."[164] The full import of this philosophy of history has something in common with the organic view of history.

Surendranath holds the view that the study of the past helps us understand the present and forecast, however inadequately, the vital tendencies of the future.[165] It appears that he believed in the practical utility of the study of history. But history has no 'sermon to preach, no philippic to deliver and no moral to point'. Next, he seems to have caught, like many others of his class, the prevalent idea of historical evolution and progress. "Nature planned the survival of the fittest, and in war the strongest is the fittest, and strongest must survive."[166] A not-very-distant echo of the Darwinian theory of evolution and progress. Further, Surendranath holds a comprehensive view of history.[167] History must survey the total human experience and activities, political, social, economic, institu-

tional, religious, literary and artistic. In short, history is the totality of human endeavour. Fourthly, for him, as for those who belong to the Idealist School of History, ideas are more important than deeds, 'for deeds are at best the outward reflection of the ideas which supply the motive force in all human affairs'.[168] Finally, the historian has cautioned his fellow-travellers against three common pitfalls—political partisanship, racial prejudice and subjective studies. The first gives only propagandist literature, the second a biased history and the third a one-sided version of the past.[169]

The biographer of *Aswini Kumar Dutta* was influenced by the ideas and impulses which characterised the age (1890-1962). As A. C. Banerjee puts it,

> "with his mind stimulated by contact with the Swadeshi movement in whieh his own district (Barisal) played an important role, Sen found in the role of the Marathas in Indian history an appropriate theme".[170]

Fired by patriotism, inspired by Sir Asutosh Mukherjee and stimulated by the moving forces of the time Surendranath turned to the institutional history of the Marathas. The fall of the Marathas, their demoralisation and degradation sadden him. His aim is not only to discover and establish the administrative structure of the Marathas but also to silence their hostile and unsympathetic critics. His view of Shivaji appears to have been influenced by the nationalist feeling of the age. Of Shivaji he writes—

> "Is it any wonder that the Hindus burning with the shame of their degradation should admire and worship him (Shivaji) ?"[171]

An echo of the so-called extremist ideology in the early years of the present century.[172] In his last major work, *Eighteen Fifty-seven*, Surendranath, however, rises above his earlier nationalist feeling and takes a critical view of that exceptionally exciting and highly controversial subject. The apparent explanation seems to be that with the coming of independence passions and emotions subsided and the historian could take a calm and sober view of the event.[173] Though a nationalist,

Surendranath was moderate, judicious and balanced in his historical studies.

Surendranath's work are, however, marked by several shortcomings. In *Administrative System* he has put much reliance on Ranade and quotes him as if he is the unquestionable authority on the subject.[174] In the same work he has quoted a whole legal or revenue document to substantiate his statement or to establish a new point.[175] This indicates the lack of synthetic qualities in the historian. This type of historical writing is now obsolete. Though in his view history is the totality of human activities, in all his works, major and minor, he has not given due attention to economic[176] and social aspects of the problem even when the nature of the subject demanded it (as, for instance, in the case of *Eighteen Fifty-seven*). Consequently political, military and administrative aspects of history are predominant in his works. The sister disciplines of history had no use for him.

Surendranath is admittedly a pioneer in the field of institutional history and a pioneer's lapses, points of omission and commission, are usually treated with sympathy and consideration. He deserves our sympathetic consideration because he initiated in the domain of modern Indian history a new field of research and specialisation and thereby demonstrated his originality of thinking. He did not take the beaten track of political history, on the contrary he chose for himself the difficult and unknown path of institutional history. He had no predecessor and still he has no worthy successor. Though comparison between two historians of different climes and conditions is not always happy and appropriate, it may not be unfair if one compares him with the pioneers of English constitutional history, Stubbs and Maitland. Surendranath Sen is first and foremost an institutional historian. His *Administrative and Military System of the Marathas* together with *Eighteen Fifty-seven* will assure him a place among the scholars of modern Indian history.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. G. R. Elton, op. cit., p. 32.

2. G. S. Sardesai, *Jadunath Sarkar As I Know Him*, in H. R. Gupta ed. Jadunath Sarkar Commemoration Volume I.

3. K. R. Qanungo, op. cit., p. 129.

4. A. Tripathi, *Columbus of Mughal history*. The Statesman, December 1970.

Jadunath was awarded P. R. S. by the University of Calcutta in 1897. So his total service to the Muse covered more than sixty years (1879-1958).

5. 'Radio talk, 1948' and *'Sir Jadunath Sarkar—A Centenary Trbute'*, Calcutta 1970. Ananda Bazar Patrika, 4th November, 1952. Bengal Past and Present, Sir Jadunath Centenary No. 1970.

6. A. L. Srivastava, *Sir Jadunath Sarkar* in S. P. Sen ed. op. cit., p. 136.

7. J. N. Sarkar, 'A word to the Research workers in Indian history', Bengal Past and Present Jubilee No. 1957, p. 1.

8. A. Tripathi, loc. cit., Jadunath covered Mughal history from 1620-1803 by hard work for half a century. Vide his letter to Raghubir Singh dt. May 5, 1950. Quoted in Making of a Princely Historian.

9. He is also known as Sujan Rai Bhandari.

10. *History of Aurangzib*, Vol. V, p. 1. Dryden wrote Tragedy of Aurangzib.

11. *Aurangzib*, Vol. V, p. 8.

12. Ibid., p. 3.

13. *Aurangzib*, Vol. V, p. 4. Zahiruddin Faruki's *Aurangzib and His Times* (Bombay, 1935) provides an apology for Aurangzib. It is mainly directed against Sarkar's interpretation of Aurangzib and his policies. Faruki's main thesis is that whatever Aurangzib did was for the reasons of State and policy.

14. Sir Theodore Morrison, *Economic Journal*, London, Sept. 1911.

15. *Shivaji And His Times*, p. 53. Jadunath's verdict on Shivaji's murder of Afzal Khan is what Burke called 'a preventive murder'.

16. 1bid., p. 496.

17. Also published as a separate volume under the title *Nadir Shah in India.*

18. G. S. Sardesai, H. R, Gupta ed. op. cit., p. 32.

19. J. N. Sarkar to G. S. Sardesai in H. R. Gupta ed. op. cit., p. 265.

20. *Fall of the Mughal Empire*, Vol. I.

21. *Chaitanya : His Pilgrimage and Teachings* (1913) earlier edition.

22. Combined volume of first and second series (1920, 1925) appeared in 1925.

23. *Mughal Administration*, p. 8.

24. J. N. Sarkar, *House of Shivaji*, Preface.

25. J. N. Sarkar ed. *History of Bengal*, Vol. II, Preface.

26. Bengali poet Nabin Chandra Sen and dramatist Sachin Sen idealised Siraj's character which is not historically true.

27. The Statesman, Hindusthan Standard, Ananda Bazar Patrika, Modern Review, Itihas, Bengal Past and Present, Masik Basumati, Sahitya Parishad Patrika etc.

Also see A. De and B. Ray, *Jadunath Rachanapanji* (C.H.S.)

28. N K. Sinha, *Bengal Past and Present*, July-Dec. 1958 and also see Vol. 77, Part I, 1958 ; Vol. 89, Part II, 1970 ; Vol. 92, Part II, 1973 ; Itihas 1364-65 (B.S.) Vol. 8, No. 4.

29. J. N. Sarkar, Studies in Mughal India. William Irvine p. 250. Introduction to Later Mughals, Aurangzib, Vol. I, xxiii.

30. As Jadunath depended heavily on Persian manuscript sources the charge of having Pro-Persian bias has been levelled against him. Some even questioned his knowledge of Persian. These however, are not given much credence.

31. *Insha-i. Haft Anjuman* (Jaysingh-Aurangzib correspondence), Waqai Shah Alam Sani (Delhi chronicle), numerous letters of the actors in the political drama of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, *Mirza Nathan's Baharistan-i-Ghaibi*, etc.

32. G. P. Gooch, op cit.,.p. 97.

33. J. N. Sarkar to Sardesai in H. R. Gupta ed. op. cit., p. 169.

34. Aurangzib, Vol. I, p. 301.

35. Ibid,, Vol. III, pp. 205-207.

36. *Aurangzib* Vol. IV, p. 49. Shivaji's daring night attack on Shaista Khan, 5th April, 1663.

37. A. Tripathi, loc. cit., Jadunath, in his boyhood days, read De Jomini's *Art of War*. Jomini was an authority on military history. His treatment of battles compares well with those of Clausewitz, Napier and Churchill.

38. N. K. Sinha, loc. cit.

39. *Aurangzib*, Vol. V, pp. 1-3.

40. *Studies in Mughal India*—Oriental Monarchies, p. 304.

41. *Shivaji And his Times*, Preface p. 7. Jadunath was not against giving reflections and generalisations but only after 'the bedrock of ascertained and unassailable facts' has been constructed. See Later Mughals Vol. I, p. xxiv.

42. G. M. Trevelyan—Autobiography and other Essays, p. 68. and B. Russell—*History as an Art in Portraits from Memory and other Essays*. p. 183.

43. During his long stay at Patna (1899-1917, 1923-26) Jadunath came into close contact with some eminent Muslim scholars and aristocrats with refined Persian culture (here one should recall his glowing tribute to *Khuda Baksh the Indian Bodley*). His life-long study

of Mughal historical literature in Persian, the sobering impact of Persian culture on the tough Turkish Character and administration in India, his sensitive Bengali mind which has something in common with the mystic Persian view of life possibly offer some clues to an understanding of his pro-Persian bias.

44. Tarasankar Banerjee, *Historian's bias* in S. P, Sen ed. *The North and the South in Indian History* pp. 222-23.

45. G. S. Sardesai in H. R. Gupta ed. op. cit., p. 32.

46. J. N. Sarkar, *A word to Research workers in Indian history*, Bengal Past and Present, Jubilee No. 1957 and A. L. Srivastava in S. P. Sen ed. op. cit., p. 139.

47. *His letter to Raghubir Singh of Sitamau dt. 14th Dec., 1934.* published in Making of a Princely Historian etc.

48. G. S. Sardesai in H. R. Gupta ed. op. cit., p. 32.

49. *Fall iv*, pp. 343-44.

50. J. N. Sarkar, *Military History of India*, p. 6. and *Message of Jadunath* in H. R. Gupta ed. op. cit., vol. I.

His views on methodology are collected from his scattered writings on history and historians. One guiding principle of his methodology was 'no document, no history'. He insisted on the use of 'the purest and the most immediate documents' but only after such documents have been critically, examined covering their 'authenticity, origin authorship and bias'.

51. *Fall i*, Preface iv.

52. Ibid., Preface iii-iv.

53. *Aurangzib*, Vol. V, p. 493, *Mughal Adm.* p. 151.

"Forward, forward let us range, let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change" (Tennyson). *Mughal Adam*, p. 152. "We must embracc the spirit of progress with a full and unquestioning faith—" India through the Ages, p. 83.

54. *Aurangzib*, Vol. V, p. 495, *Fall iv*, pp. 215, 347, 350.

55. H. R. Gupta op. cit., p. 13. Jadunath sees in history the working of 'inexorable forces' which no amount of human intelligence can perceive or explain nor can it be altered by any human Contrivance. India Through the Ages, p. 89.

56. *Fall iii*, p, 455, *Fall iv*, p. 215.

57. *Aurangzib*, Vol. I, p. xv.

58. *Fall iii*, p. 446.

59. *Presidential Address* (in Bengali), History Section, Bangiya Sahitya Sammelan, 1915 (1322 B S.) Burdwan. Published in the *Pravasi* (Bengali) Baisakh, 1322 B.S.

Also see Jagadish Narayan Sarkar's article on *Sir Jadunath Sarkar's Historical Beliefs*. Journal of Historical Research, Ranchi University, Jan. 1967. 'I would not care whether truth is pleasant or unpleasant, acceptable to the people or opposed to popular notion. I would

not care whether it hurts the national pride or not. For the sake of its propagation I would be ready to suffer reproach from the society or friends. But I shall seek truth, understand truth and accept truth. This should be the firm resolve of an historian'. (Translation mine).

60. K. R. Qanungo op. cit., p. 117, Jadunath's younger brother Bijaynath was a staunch Swadeshi.

61. *Aurangzib*, Vol. V, p. 494.

62. *Shivaji*, p. 496.

63. *Fall iv*, Preface.

64. *History of Bengal Vol. II*, p. 497 & *Fall iv*, p. 347.

Mohitlal Majumdar, a contemporary Bengali stalwart, calls him an Anglophile and a blind worshipper of British Rule in India. See Majumdar's 'Bangla-o-Bangali' (Bengali), Calcutta, 1358 B. S. pp. 125-135. Jadunath tells us that Pax Britannica alone has made the birth of a new India possible. *Fall i*, p. 180.

65. H. Beveridge called him a Bengali Gibbon.

66. P. Geyl, *Debates with historians*, p. 195.

67. S. R. Tikekar, on *Historiography*, p. 32.

68. G. S. Sardesai, *Mazi Sansaryatra* (1956).

69. Author's farewell—*New History of the Marathas*, Vol. III.

70. J. N. Sarkar, *Govind Sakharam Sardesai* in S. R. Tikekar ed. Sardesai Commemoration volume, p. 297.

71. G. S. Sardesai, *New History of Marathas*, Vol. I, p. 51.

72. *New History*, Vol. II, pp. 14-15.

73. Sardesai appears to have read English translation of extracts from Gangaram's *Maharashtra Puran* as he refers to it in Vol. II of *New History*. One wonders how could he write in such a partisan manner (Chapter IX) after reading Gangaram. His attitude to the treatment of Rajput states by the Marathas is also partisan.

74. *Main Currents of Maratha History*, Preface.

75. *New History* Vol. I, Preface 3.

76. J. N. Sarkar, *Shivaji And His Times*, p. 503.

77. S. N. Sen, mercilessly criticised them in his Presidential Address at the Indian History Congress, Madras, 1944. The gist of what he said on that occasion is that these source materials should have been better left unedited. Sardesai replied from the same platform in 1951 (Jaipur Congress). While admitting some erros of omission and commission Sardesai advised his learned friend to be a little more tolerant.

78. J. N. Sarkar, *G. S. Sardesai* in Tikekar ed. Commemoration volume, pp, 299-300.

79. Preface to *New History*, Vol. I and his letter to his friend J. N. Sarkar dated 13th June, 1944. Quoted in H. R. Gupta ed. op. cit., p. 345.

80. Letter of Sardesai to Sarkar, dated 7th July, 1943. Quoted in H. R. Gupta ed. op. cit., pp. 336-337.

81. Preface to Vol. I, *New History*.

82. Take for example, Shivaji's exhortation to his comrades to take up arms in defence of religion and national honour against Muslim oppression and bigotry. Vol. I (New History) p. 97. Also see Sardesai's letter to Sarkar dated 13th June, 1944.

83. So far as the Persian sources of Maratha history are concerned, Sardesai received enormous help from his friend Jadunath Sarkar, vide Sarkar-Sardesai Correspondence in *Life and Letters* of J. N. Sarkar Vol. I. Sardesai's linguistic equipment was rather weak. He knew only Marathi, Sanskrit and English.

84. J. N. Sarkar, *G. S. Sardesai* in Tikekar ed. op. cit., p. 298.

85. Sardesai to Sarkar, Tikekar op. cit., p. 35.

86. Sarkar, Sardesai Correspondence in H. R. Gupta, ed. op. cit.

87. *Vol. I, New History*, p. 264.

88. *Vol. I New History*, p. 263. Sardesai discussed the point in a letter to J. N. Sarkar, vide his letter dated 7th August, 1947 in H. R. Gupta ed. op. cit., p. 352.

89. *New History Vol. III*, pp. 349-350. Also see Sardesai's letter to Sarkar dated 13th Jan., 1950.

90. Ibid. Vol. I, Preface 3, A nation's history can best be written by a man belonging to it.

91. Sardesai to Sarkar, Tikekar op. cit., p. 35.

Though he subsequently wrote "I will now allow documents to speak rather than impose my views upon readers", he could not detach himself from his writings.

92. *New History Vol. III*, p. 520.

93. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 101.

94. *New History Vol. I*, p. 113.

95. Ibid,, Vol. III, pp. 519-20. 'The usual spiritual aspect of Hindu life, its soft and charitable character stands in severe contrast with the inhuman wicked practies of the Muslims...One must rccognise that Maratha rule, although too short, is not stained by such dark blots as have blackened the Mughal regime.'

96. Vasant D. Rao, *G. S. Sardesai* in S. P. Sen ed. op. cit., p. 231.

97. *Main Currents*, p. 31.

98. Ibid., p. 31.

99. *New History Vol. I*, Preface.

The Maratha history 'should prove a source of inspiration, wisdom and warning to all India'.

100. *New History Vol. III*, p. 517.

101. Ibid., p. 519.

102. *Presidential Address*, Jaipur History Congress, 1951.

103. *New History Vol. I*, p. 166, ibid., p. 99.

104. Ibid., p. 197.

105. *Main Currents*, p. 52.

106. *New History Vol. III*, p. 522.

107. Vasudeo Valwant Phadke, Shivaji Utsav, Ganapati festival B. G. Tilak, Chapekar brothers, V. D. Savarkar—all contributed to this process.

108. *New History Vol. I*, Preface, pp. 101, 153.

109. 'It is still a difficult task for a Maratha writer to paint his people's history on a canvas with colours that truly represent facts and avoid prijudices.' Preface to Vol. I of *New History*.

110. *Presidential Address*, Jaipur History Congress, 1951.

111. *Main Currenes*, p. 184.

112. Ibid., p. 52.

113 & 114. Sardesai does not evaluate the contributions of Maratha heroes Shivaji, Baji Rao I, Nana Fadnis, Mahadji Sindhia, Madhav Rao. He is more interested in citing the opinions of others than giving his own judgment.

Ranade cherished the hope of a 'masterly history of the Marathas' coming from a mastermind. Preface to Vol. I, p. 4.

115. The nationalism professed and championed by the Indian historians in the first half of the present century has been strongly criticised by some as 'narrow, vague, deceptive, false and indirect' as its ideology rested mainly on the opposition to Medieval Indian Empires, not to British Imperialism. See *Communalism and the writing of Indlan History* by Romila Thapar, Harbans Mukhia and Bipanchandra, pp. 64-79.

116. Tikekar op. cit., p. 298.

117. G. P. Gooch op. cit., p. 177,

118. *Presidential Address*, Modern Indian History Section, Indian Histoy Congress, Lahore Session, 1940.

His idea of the unity of history has a striking similarity with the Hegelian notion of organic unity in Social Organism or its later modified form organic totality concept.

119. *Presidential Address*, Early Medieval and Rajput History Section, Indian History Congress, Allahabad Session, 1938.

120, Surendranath's home district Barisal played an important role in the Swadeshi Movement (1903-1908). Sumit Sarkar, *The Swadeshi movement in Bengal*, pp. 50-51.

121. S. Sen, *Administrative System of the Marathas* preface xii, Richard Bury Ramsbotham had been in the Government Educational Service as teacher of History and English literature and later as Principal. He is considered one of the earliest experts on post-plassey land revenue history of Bengal.

122. Ibid., Preface. Post-graduate History Department of the University of Calcutta was started in 1916-17.

123. It is interesting to note that he was the first to hold the Chair of Asutosh Professor of Medieval and Modern Indian History of the

University of Calcutta. See *Hundred Years of the University of Calcutta*, Supplement, p. 171.

124. S. Sen, *Administrative system*, p. 1.

125. Ibid., p. 531.

126. Ibid., p. 517.

127. S. Sen, *Administrative system*, p. 599.

128. Many European writers have deseribed thc Marathas as robbers. plunderers and scoundrels. Sen's work was intended to silence them. See Preface to Administrative system, p. viii.

129. W. H, Tone, *Some Mahratta Institutions*. William Henry Tone served in a regiment of infantry under the Peshwas.

130. S. Sen, *Administrative System*, pp. 174-175.

131. S. Sen, *Military System of the Marathas*. Introduction xv & xvi.

132. S. Sen, *Eighteen Fifty Seven*, Foreword xx, Preface xiii.

133. Ibid., Preface xiii.

134. S. Sen, *Eighteen Fifty Seven*, Foreword xx Preface xiii.

135. S. B. Chaudhury, *Theories of the Indian Mutiny*. pp. 5-6.

136. S. Sen, *Eighteen Fifty-seven*, p. 405.

137. Ibid., p. 405.

S. B. Chaudhuri considers Sen's *Eighteen Fifty Seven* a continuation of the tradition of British historiography. The doings of the English, Chaudhuri tells us, are studied in all their detail, but the presence of the people of India as a whole does not make itself felt. He, however, concedes that the work is an important contribution to the corpus of major Indian studies on the subject. See S. B. Chaudhuri's *English Historical writings on the Indian Mutiny (1857-59)*.

138. S. Sen, *Eighteen Fifty-seven*, p. 405.

139. Ibid., pp. 411-413.

140. Ibid., p. 418.

141. *The Portuguese in Bengal* in *History of Bengal*, Vol. II ed. by J. N. Sarkar and *Writings on the Mutiny* in C. H, Philips ed. *Historians of India Pakistan and Ceylon*.

Sen's article *An Early Portuguese Account of Bengal* (Calcutta Review Vol. LXVI, March 1938) contains English translation of Dom Joao de Leyma's (1518) letters to the King of Portugal, Cochin etc.

142. Most of these articles were published in leading Indian Journals.

143. S. Sen, *Off the Main Track*, Preface.

144. These letters relate to the period from 1772 to 1820.

145. Sumit Sarkar op. cit., p. 51.

146. S. Sen, *Eighteen Fifty-seven*, Preface xxiii.

The extant official records and contemporary and semi contemporary sources of the great event of 1857 give more than adequate representation to the British side. The Indian side is rather poorly represented. Hence the imbalance.

147. For two reasons Surendranath could not consult all the sources. First, the time in his hand was too short to permit exhaustive research. Secondly, for some technical difficulties all the papers could not be made available to him. For instance, he could not consult Tukoji Rao Holkar's *Diary* and *Autobiography* of Sardar Mule of Indore.

148. S. Sen, *Kanhoji Angria and other papers*, p. 206.

149. J. R. Hale, *Evolution of British Historiography*, p. 69.

150. S. Sen, *Early Career of Kanhoji Angria etc.* p. 206.

151. S. Sen, *Presidential Address*, I. H. C,, Madras, 1944.

152. From an institutional historian like him one can not expect the literary flourish of a Trevelyan or the high-flown rhetoric of a Macaulay.

153. S. Sen, Administrative System, pp. 17-18.

154. S. Sen, *Eighteen Fifty-seven*, p. 65.

155. S. Sen, *Military system*, p. 242.

156. S. Sen, *The Portuguese in Bengal* in History of Bengal Vol. II, p. 363.

157. S. Sen, *Early Career of Kanhoii Angria* etc. p. 194.

158. S. Sen, *Administrative System*, Preface x & xi.

'After all the historians are human beings and heirs to the common frailties of their kind. They are susceptible, be it unconsciously, to the influence of their environment and it is not at all easy to rise above the prevailing prejudices of the times. Presidential Address, I.H.C., Madras, 1944.

159. S. Sen, *Presidential Address*, I.H.C., Allahabad, 1938.

160. S. Sen, *Presidential Address*, I.H.C., Allahabad, 1938.

161. *Presidential Address*, I.H.C., Madras, 1944.

162. S. Sen, *Presidential Address*, I.H.C., Lahore, 1940.

163. Ibid.

164. S. Sen, *Presidential Address*, I.H.C., Lahore, 1940.

165. Ibid. and *Presidential Address*, I.H.C., Madras, 1944.

166. S. Sen, *Military System*, p. 214 and *Early Career* etc., p. 184.

167. 'History essays a comprehensive survey of the evolution of human civilization and the entire field of human activities forms its domain'. Presidential Address, Madras, 1944.

168. S. Sen, *Military system of the Marathas*, p. 211.

169. 'To try to harness history to the chariot wheels of politics is a senseless sacrilege, for history written to order is propagandist literature and subjective studies must necessarily be one sided.' Presidential Address, I.H.C., Madras, 1944.

170. A. C. Banerjee, *Dr. Surendranath Sen* in S. P. Sen ed. op. cit., p. 353.

171. S. Sen, *Military System*, p. 20.

172. Amales Tripathi, *Swadeshi, Communalism and Historian* in the Ananda Bazar Patrika, 15th Bhadra, 1384 B.S.

173. Surendranath honestly admits that it is not at all easy to rise above the prevailing prejudices of the times. See Presidential Address, I.H.C., Madras, 1944.

174. S. Sen, *Administrative System*, pp. 37, 62, 78, 87, 165, 167, 258, 272, 284.

175. S. Sen, *Administrative System*, pp. 180-222.

176. K. Sengupta, *Writings on the Revolt of 1857*.

Chapter Four

NATIONALIST SCHOOL OF ECONOMIC HISTORIANS

I

Dadabhai Naoroji is the first of the famous trio (the other two being M. G. Ranade and R. C. Dutt) who brought into fashion a national economic ideology which 'the socio-economic compulsions of the age and the growing political consciousness of the Indians' required and demanded in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[1] They made a brilliant attempt towards an understanding of the structure of colonialism and colonial economy.[2] Intimate contact with the stark reality of Indian poverty and the tragic consequences of a colonial economy stimulated realistic economic thinking which appears to be sound to the core, although it may lack sophistication.[3] Dadabhai and his compeers had instinctively developed a habit and pattern of thinking on nineteenth-century Indian economy which is amazingly striking and remarkable.

Born of poor Parsi parents at Khadak in Bombay on 4th September, 1825, Dadabhai lost his father when he was only four years old. His widowed mother brought him up and made him what he was in later life.[4] A student of Elphinstone Institution, Dadabhai was especially bright in mathematics. On the completion of his academic career he was offered the humble chair of Head Native Assistant Master in his alma-mater which was a stepping-stone to the post of Assistant Professor of Mathematics and later Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy. From his college days Dadabhai plunged himself headlong into socio-religious reforms and spread of literacy. In 1855 he left teaching and went to serve a commercial firm of the Camas in London. Later Dadabhai severed his connection with the Camas, set up his own firm and became the self-appointed ambassador of India. From this

time onward Dadabhai lived and worked for India and made various efforts for the redress of her grievances. Since 1870 he started enquiring into the nature and causes of Indian poverty. As he was essentially a politician it was but natural that his economic thinking should be coloured by his political ideas.[5] Obviously he approached politics through the door of economics. Unlike Ranade, Dadabhai was not an academically trained scholar of economics nor was he thoroughly familiar with classical or post-classical economics.[6] A representative man, Dadabhai, however, gave a well-defined form and content to a doctrine already moulded into shape by many of his predecessors.[7] His drain theory summarises 'the essence of his thinking on Indian economic problems in general and the causes of poverty in a colonial economy in particular'. From the point of view of coherence and unity of design 'his economic thinking and ideas hold together remarkably well' and disclose unity of thought and purpose, although apparently they appear to be disorganised and chaotic.

Dadabhai's *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (1901) is a disorderly and incoherent compilation of papers, statements and speeches spread over a period of thirty years (1870-1901). The huge mass of materials collected by him could have been easily rearranged and a bulky volume of about seven hundred pages given a more well-knit form and scholarly shape. As it stands now, it is a loosely-knit collection of writings, speeches and letters. One finds in his work 'wearisome repetition of the same arguments and themes, tedious overlapping of subjects' and lack of planning in the development of the subject-matter. The work may be broadly divided into two sections—economic and political. On the economic side almost all the broad aspects of the nineteenth century Indian economy—production and distribution, taxation, railways, foreign trade, prices and wages, currency and exchange, public debt and income, and finally the drain have been discussed in some detail. Of course his main thesis is the economic drain and all other issues are subsidiary to it. His analysis throws new light on the topics discussed. The work is a mine of information for the nineteenth century Indian economic

history. Defect in the presentation and treatment of subject matter notwithstanding, it was widely read in India and England in his lifetime.[8]

A confirmed patriot, Dadabhai[9] set himself the arduous task of proving 'the appalling poverty and distress' of the Indian people and 'the astounding indifference and extravagance' of the British rulers which, he considered, quite "Un-British" in character and suicidal to Britain.[10] The task demanded 'patient study of details, intelligent research, exceptional knowledge, skill and reasoning in marshalling facts and figures'. Fortunately for India Dadabhai had the requisite qualities and was equal to the task. Official information on his subject was inadequate, incomplete and often misleading.[11] Official bluebooks did not provide information on the issues with which he was most concerned. The sources of non-official information were practically dry. The Universities in India had not yet popularised the study of economics; books on the subject were not to be easily found. Economic journals on Indian economic problems were rare. *The Indian Economist* only gave some information in the early seventies of the last century. Undaunted Dadabhai gathered from far and near many source-materials bearing on his favourite theme—the Indian economy of the nineteenth century.

Dadabhai had an insatiable thirst for statistics. Cama[12] bought for him official publications. He purchased for him practically all the volumes of Hansard (Parliamentary debates). In India he collected a large number of books, reports, returns and calendars. In his economic studies he primarily depended on *Statistical Committee Report on the Moral and Material Progress of India*, *Statistical Abstract of British India*, *the Census Reports*, *Accounts of high British officials and Standard histories* by British historians of India, particularly Mill, Grant Duff and Hunter. Dadabhai also frantically searched many other sources of information on his subject. Still admittedly his sources were limited; tools inadequate and imperfectly designed and to modern economist these may appear unscientific and unsound. Nevertheless Dadabhai knew at least what type of tools one should use in the study of economic

problems.[13] A common charge against him is that he primarily used British official documents and British authorities. This was deliberate. His aim was to convince the British authorities and the British public and they could not distrust their own papers. Having collected his materials, Dadabhai subjected them to analysis and then came to his conclusions. All these he had to do in the midst of multifarious activities and therefore it is not unlikely, as some writers have pointed out, that thorough investigation, sifting and analysis of evidence was not done.[14] However, Dadabhai had the intellectual quality of keeping his facts and figures upto date.

With imperfact tools and incomplete materials at his command, Dadabhai set out to prove his main thesis that India was being bled white. By rough and ready means he computed India's total annual production at three hundred and forty million pounds for a population of one hundred and seventy million with per capita income of 40sh or Rs. 20 for an average good season.[15] He calculated India's annual economic drain and put it at between thirty and forty million pounds.[16] His estimate of per capita income is close to Baring-Barbour estimate of Rs. 27 (1882) and Curzon's figure of Rs. 30 (1901). He had no illusions about official statistics and therefore made general allowances for errors and omissions. He was always anxious 'to underestimate. rather than over-estimate',[17] in order to give at least approximate results. His method of computing national income, though imperfect and left out of calculation some items of utility value and services, broke a new ground.[18] He was the first to work out the details of cost of living in India.[19] He knew the economic maxim that the lowest cost of living is generally above the average share and that the poorer section of the community did not get the full share of the average income.

Drain[20] from India, according to Dadabhai, was both material and moral. Besides the sum of forty million pounds drained from India every year the British Indian Empire was mainly built at the entire expense of India. Moral drain was no less staggering. Experienced British officials retired to England with their money causing triple evil—loss of wealth,

wisdom and work to India.[21] Economic drain which was again both external and internal operated through a complicated process of external trade—unrequited export surplus—and the internal transfer of wealth from the people to the government. Dadabhai was aware of 'the reality of economic drain involved in the transfer of wealth or purchasing power as between classes and regions within a country'. Perhaps he contributed more than anybody else towards establishing the theory of drain, the resultant loss of capital and poverty of India. One writer goes so far as to call him "the acknowledged theoretician—the high priest of the drain theory".[22]

Dadabhai had a dismal view of the pattern of taxation in India. He saw that taxation was inequitably regressive in character. Its incidence rested heavily on the masses of the population who contributed about seventy-five per cent of the total revenue. He shared the prevalent Indian notion that the incidence of land revenue was too heavy and uncertain. Dadabhai however, did not high-light the agrarian problems. Instead he concentrated on the wider and the more basic evil of economic drain. He was not opposed to the extension of Indian Railway as such but what appeared objectionable to him was that "the whole burden of the debt is placed on the shoulders of the people of India ; while the benefit is largely enjoyed and carried away by the people of England".[23] The real important question in relation to public works, he argued, was not how to stop them, but how to let the people of the country have their full benefits.[24]

With an impressive array of facts and figures Dadabhai challenged the assertion of the ruling class that wages and prices had risen enormously and therefore India was prosperous. It was not only an exaggeration, he argued, but also incorrect to a great extent. The main plank of his argument was that the rise in prices and wages was only a local and temporary phenomenon owing to the operation of certain economic forces (scarcity, bad season, construction of railway, etc.) in a particular locality.[25] To take it as an indication of India's general prosperity was not only erroneous but also misleading. His observation on the problems of exchange and

currency reveals his understanding of and insight into international exchange problems and the peculiar Indian position of his time. Let him speak out :

> "Fall or rise in exchange does not matter much in international trade, beyond introducing one more element of chances of profit or loss during the currency of any transaction. When the relation of gold and silver is settled, subject only to the ordinary fluctuations of trade, it will be of no consequence whether a rupee is 2s or 1s or 3s. Any other silver-using country which is not peculiarly politically situated like India by 'the character of its government', will not be affected by any evil similar to that of British India by the fall in silver."[26]

The real and lasting remedy for all British India's evils, he believed, lay not in any artificial devices or manipulation of currency but in removing the true causes of poverty to a proper extent. Dadabhai also expressed the view that India would not be benefited by bimetallism which was being talked of at the time.[27]

Dadabhai's style of narration is "inimitably simple".[28] As an illustration of his style of writing a passage from his *Poverty* may be quoted,

> "The chief cause of India's poverty, misery and all material evils, is the exhaustion of its previous wealth, the continuously increasing, exhausting and weakening drain from its annual production by the very excessive expenditure on the European portion of all its services, and the burden of a large amount a year to be paid to foreign countries for interest on public debt, which is chiefly caused by the British rule."[29]

This single-sentence narration of economic drain and its baneful effects on Indian economy reveals a powerful pen and its unquestionable mastery of the language. Dadabhai, however, wrote lengthy, involved and complex sentences. Flamboyancy was his peculiarity.

Dadabhai was not a Marxian socialist but his close contact with the British socialist leader Mayers Hyndman gave a socialist touch to his thinking.[30] He was a man of the people

and had risen from their ranks. Favourably disposed towards Mill's mild socialism,[31] he got himself associated with the cause of labour and attended a Socialist Congress.[32] Despite this socialist bias in his thought Dadabhai was not dogmatic in his approach to Indian economic problems. Though he started from a pre-conceived notion, he was essentially a pragmatist, an empiricist who did not like to be wedded to any particular dogma.[33] Biased though he was in favour of his people, Dadabhai was impartial enough to acknowledge the positive and beneficial aspects of British rule. In his approach to problems he tried to be objective and gave factual statement. A seeker of truth, Dadabhai refused "to bend and adapt facts to a foregone conclusion".[34]

His methodology was simple. His drain theory provides 'a conceptual framework within which his entire economic ideas and his views on important problems of his times' can be accommodated. Statistics were the backbone of his method, but Dadabhai made it clear that with imperfect material at command and without the means to work out all the details, he could give only approximate results.[35] His approach was crude and rough. His manner of handling and sifting statistics was un-sophisticated. His process of reasoning and the principles followed were not always unquestionable. Nevertheless his estimate of national and per capita income was roughly as accurate as it could then have been with the statistics available. Dadabhai gives an account of his method in the following words,

> "The principle of my calculation is briefly this. I have taken the largest one or two kinds of produce of a province to represent all its produce, as it would be too much labour for me to work out every produce, great and small, I have taken the whole cultivated area of each district, the produce per acre, and the price of the produce; and simple multiplication and addition will give you both the quantity and the value of the total produce. From it, also, you can get the correct average of produce per acre and of prices for the whole province, as in this way you have all the necessary elements taken into account."[36]

Obviously his method of calculation did not include all items of utility and services and to that extent it is incomplete. Dadabhai's was the pioneering attempt in the field and all pioneering works suffer from some deficiencies.

Dadabhai was not a trained economist. But he had 'a wonderful sense of economic realism which often eludes a trained economist'. In his materialist concept of wealth and national income he was evidently influenced by the physiocratic writings.[37] The debt he owed to classical English economists cannot be doubted. On innumerable occasions he approvingly quoted John Stuart Mill as an authority on economics. An admirer of British liberal tradition, Dadabhai was a Cobden Club free-trader but clearly saw that protection was absolutely necessary in the unnatural conditions of India.[38] He was very close to socialism provided it abjured violence. Essentially a man of peace, Dadabhai advocated radical changes, political, economic and socio-religious, through peaceful and constitutional means. His watch-word was self-government or swaraj.[39]

A victorian, Dadabhai had almost a romantic faith in the British sense of justice and fair play in the early part of his life. He entered the House of Commons as a Gladstonian and an ardent advocate of Home Rule.[40] A great man of his times, he truly represented the hopes and aspirations of his people which were very moderate. These were admission of Indians to the management of their own affairs, reduction of economic burden, diminution of economic drain and state support to the growth of economy. His in-depth study of Indian economy provided a strong plank in the programme and agitation of the Indian National Congress.[41] The National Congress stood on a firmer and surer ground so far as its economic grievances were concerned. His writings, along with those of his compeers, gave birth to what is known as economic nationalism and paved the ground for the emergence of an extremist outlook in Indian politics. Towards the end of his career there was a perceptible shift in Dadabhai's political out-look. His faith in British love for freedom, justice and fairness was gradually being shaken. Throwing off his mode-

rate stance, he was veering round towards extremism.[42]

Dadabhai's persistent demand for the abolition of income-tax and the Indianisation of services 'reflected his own class bias and class interests'.[43] He forgot that income-tax affected only the richer section of the community. The poverty-stricken people for whom he fought all his life might be benefited from its proceeds and that it might help 'equitable distribution of national wealth'. Perhaps he could not trust the colonial government. In his writings Dadabhai appears to be prone to exaggeration. His statements that the lot of the unhappy Indian natives was somewhat worse than that of the slaves of America,[44] or that it is the constant drain to which should be attributed her famines and plagues, destruction and impoverishment are certainly hyperbolic and unrestrained emotional outburst. Such instances may be easily multiplied. Dadabhai also failed to perceive that 'the British capital imported into India was helping the growth of economy, however slowly or haltingly'. Lastly, Dadabhai could not properly understand and locate all forms of economic drain, for example drainage through growing industries like Tea and Jute or through the exploitation of cheap Indian labour.

It may be of some interest to know the constructive economic ideas of the man who criticised British economic policy in India throughout his life. His constructive ideas have the following salient features : (i) Provision of capital necessary for all public works of a permanent character required to increase production and facilitate distribution, (ii) a just adjustment of financial relations between England and India so that the political drain might be reasonably diminished, (iii) to attract capital and enterprise to utilize the vast cultivable waste lands, (iv) to increase the intelligence of the people by a comprehensive plan of national education, (v) the country needed industrialisation on a large scale. It required capital. As India was woefully deficient in this respect because of annual drain to England, the latter should give her capital on easy terms for the development of her trade and industry, (vi) another important requirement for India's development was large irrigation works, railways and roads,

and other public works of necessity and lastly (vii) he favoured positive state action to stimulate the process of economic growth.[45] But these goals could never be achieved, Dadabhai believed, without self-government or swaraj.[46]

An acknowledged nationalist leader, Dadabhai was the first to initiate a systematic study of colonial economy. His instruments were crude and primitive, materials incoherent and incomplete, approach unsophisticated and ideas (for example, physiocratic concept of wealth or income) old and outmoded. Despite these shortcomings, Dadabhai's achievements can not be easily minimised or lightly passed over. A path-maker suffers from some initial difficulties inherent in the process itself from which his more fortunate successors are relatively free. Dadabhai's was the lot of a pioneer in both politics and the study of national economy, the latter being more difficult because it was more exacting and toilsome.

II

To Mahadev Govind Ranade goes the credit of giving a well-defined form, content, and direction to the study of Indian national economy of the late nineteenth century. A pioneer in the study of Indian economics, he brought to bear upon it his strong common sense, robust optimism, wide reading and penetrating insight. His essays and lectures reveal his scholarship and mastery over the science of political economy. 'The prince of Bombay graduates', he had a superior intellect, originality in thinking and a passion for work.[47] A self-made man, he was deeply read in History and Economics and 'thoroughly conversant with practically all the then available works on economic theory and policy'.[48] A representative man in the Emersonian sense of the term, he steadily imbibed the influences of the new forces at work in Indian society of which Bombay was the focal point in Western India.[49] Noble sentiments like love of justice, compassion for all, belief in human equality, a spirit of rectitude and sympathy for fellow-beings took deep roots in his mind. A champion of

industrial revolution in India, he gives us 'a synthetic body of ideas consistent with one another'.[50] Indian economics was to him a study of social welfare inspired by the purpose of improving the material conditions of the people. Finally, he was a representative of nascent industrial capitalism in India.

Ranade came of a middle class family of Niphad in the Nasik district of Maharashtra (January 18, 1842). He had his elementary education at Kolhapur. Then he moved up to Elphinstone High School and graduated from the Elphinstone College, Bombay, in 1862. Thereafter he took his M.A. and Ll.B. degrees from the University of Bombay. He was appointed a fellow of the University in 1866. As a teacher he taught economics and history. Between 1866 and 1873 he acted as oriental translator to the Government of Bombay, then as a law member and as representative of the Bombay Government to the Committee on Expenditure and Retrenchment of the Government of India. He became a subordinate judge in 1871 and a judge of the High Court of Bombay in 1893.[51]

Ranade's contribution to nineteenth-century Indian economic studies has come down to us in the shape of essays, articles, papers and popular lectures spread over a period of about three decades (1872-1899). His *Essays on Indian Economics* (1898) contains twelve essays on different aspects of Indian economic problems.[52] In addition, he contributed to the Journal of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, between 1878 and 1893, a series of articles on Indian economics. Of these fifteen articles have direct bearing on Indian economic studies of the last century.[53] His *two lectures*[54] on *Swadeshi trade and industries* delivered in Poona in 1872-73 and *three articles* in *the Times of India* on the question of imposing a countervailing, protective duty on the imports of sugar in India (May and June, 1899) together with *Currencies and Mints under Mahratta Rule* complete the corpus of his ceonomic studies.[55]

Ranade made an exhaustive study of English economic history and economic doctrines, continental theories and practices. He was familiar with 'the writings of the socialist opponents of the classical economists and those of the German Nationalist Historical School'.[56] As judicial officer in charge

of implementing the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act of 1879, Ranade toured wide areas of the Deccan and got first-hand information about the conditions of the Deccan peasantry. He based his articles on famines on information collected by the agents engaged by the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha for that purpose.[57] His wife Ramabai Ranade informs us that Ranade used to collect from his visitors information about conditions in the countryside—revenue, taxes, crops, soil, business, fair and festival.[58] Ranade freely drew upon Dr. Watts' *Memorandum to the Government of India* on the resources of British India particularly the Chapter *Present state of Indian Manufactures, and outlook of the same*. He spared no pains to make himself acquainted with first-hand sources of information.[59] Trade Returns, Census Statistics, Official Publications and Statistical Abstract were extensively used. If the material was insufficient and instruments imperfect at that time Ranade can not he held responsible for it. On the whole his assessment of the situation has been upheld by the students of Indian economic history in later times.[60]

Ranade studied both sides of the question with a conscientious desire to arrive at the truth.[61] He stated the case fairly without any exaggeration. While several of his compeers were animated by the spirit of the advocate and were fearful of making any concession to the opposite side, Ranade's 'approach was characterised by the spirit of the judge that he was'. He never made any attempt to gloss over the weak points of his nation and country. A realist as he was, he gave a bold, just and realistic treatment to his subject.

Ranade's essays, articles and speeches may be classified for the purpose of analysis under six heads : (i) His views on political economy or theory of economic development, (ii) Agrarian problem and its solution, (iii) State of Indian manufactures and suggestions for industrialisation, (iv) Indian Finance—economic drain, free trade, financial decentralisation, Public works etc., (v) Population and emigration and (vi) Role of the state in the economic development. Ranade sharply reacted against the English classical economists and denied that 'the truths of economic science are absolutely and demons-

trably true'. He refused to accept 'classical economic assumptions as guides of conduct for all time and place and for all stages of civilisation'.[62] Ranade listed twelve classical economic assumptions[63] which gave the conditions for a perfect market but these were conspicuously absent in Indian conditions. The best economists at the turn of the century had come to see that 'the subject must be studied historically and inductively' and it was not a sound principle to build up 'a system of dogmatic conclusions upon the postulates of individual self-interest and unrestricted competition'. 'Acknowledgement of relativity and admission of the claims of collective welfare over individual interests had become the principal features in which the newer economics differed from the older school.' Ranade argued that in the Indian society the tendencies which the classical school assumed as axiomatic were not operative. Conclusions regarding Indian economic problems and policies should be drawn with special reference to the peculiar conditions of the country and of the people. Ranade gave India "the first complete and integrated logic of economic nationalism".[64]

For Ranade, as for his compeers, the problem of problems in Indian economics was that of Indian poverty. He had a deep perception of the nature of India's economic backwardness. The bane of all eastern economies was that they were too exclusively agricultural. Only a balanced development of agriculture, industries and commerce, Ranade felt, could render a society immune from the vagaries of tropical climate. He insisted that the reform of agriculture was an essential preliminary to the success of Indian industrialisation. In many essays and addressess he considered the causes of Indian poverty and laid stress on the following : (i) too great dependence on the single source of agriculture—destruction of indigenous manufactures and handicrafts, (ii) lack of capital, (iii) bad system of credit in the rural areas and (iv) congestion of population in certain parts with the resultant excessive sub-division of holdings. His suggested remedies were : (i) legal help to the ryot against evils of perpetual indebtedness, (ii) banking and loan facilities to encourage the

flow of capital into agriculture, (iii) reform of the land tenure system so as to do away with burdensomeness and uncertainty of revision settlements—a plea for permanent settlement. For all-round agricultural prosperity he suggested revival of industries, diversion of some of the surplus labour from the land, spread of education, diminution of taxes and conservation of forests.

While Dadabhai constantly harped on the economic drain, R. C. Dutt occupied himself with land revenue and agrarian problems, Ranade's favourite theme was industrialisation. He rejected the so-called territorial division of labour[65] as unscientific, unhistorical and untrue. He wanted balanced growth of economy as a permanent national insurance against recurrent dangers of famines. He pleaded for industrialisation on a large scale, pioneering of new industries by the state, building of national credit on broad foundations and use of indigenous resources for industrial production. In his Poona speeches (1872-73) Ranadc exhorted his countrymen to act in a patriotic spirit in order to develop indigenous trade and industry. He propagated the idea of Swadeshi and urged his countrymen 'to use goods produced in the country even if they were a little more costly and less finished and polished'.[66] Like his co-workers in the field, Ranade claimed protection but in a spirit of wise moderation.[67]

Ranade was one of the earliest propounders of the theory of economic drain.[68] A basic difference between him and his compeers is that while the latter constantly harped on the drain of wealth from India to England, Ranade maintained a reserved and moderate posture on the question of drainage. He was decidedly against laissez faire and free trade doctrine. The state should undertake the construction of railways, canals, roads and works of public utility. His survey of financial decentralisation was meticulous and contained correct information. Ranade was not much interested in the currency problems of his times, growing depreciation of rupee, the problems of banking and of public finance.

Ranade had the insight to regard population as a factor of economic growth. Inland and overland emigration (diver-

sion of the surplus population from the congested parts of the country to lands where labour was dear and highly remunerative), he felt, could afford the sorely needed present relief. Permanent solution, however, depended upon the growth of industry and commerce.[69] A mercantilist and economic nationalist, Ranade advocated state paternalism[70] with a view to self-sufficiency in all his essays. He pleaded for direct action of the state with a view to causing "a diversion from samall-scale agriculture to large-scale farming, from agriculture itself to industries, from rustication to urbanisation, from internal trade to external trade, and lastly from labour immobility to colonial migration".[71] Education, both liberal and technical, post and telegraph, railway and canal communications, the pioneering of new enterprise, the insurance of risky undertakings—all these functions might be usefully discharged by the state.[72]

Like Friedrich List in Germany, Ranade was a representative of nascent industrial capitalism in India. He wanted the Indians to take initiative in industrialisation. A relativist and follower of German Nationalist Historical School, he was a firm supporter of state paternalism, not state socialism.[73] He raised his voice against the Benthamite and Ricardian influence on the economic and social policies of the Government of India. Essentially a scholar and a philosopher, Ranade had a cosmopolitan outlook.[74] There was a total absence of racial bitterness in his writings. 'He was more detached than either Dadabhai or R. C. Dutt and did not have any pet thesis to establish.'

A pragmatist economist, 'Ranade was, on the positive side, a believer in historical and inductive method and relativity of economic thinking. On the negative side he was opposed to the abstract, absolute universalism and perpetualism of classical economists and their deductive method of thinking.' He believed in the organic growth of society, in the harmonious progress of the nation as a whole, and put no trust in one-sided development.[75] Ranade also believed in the interdependence of institutions, political, economic, social and religious. "You can not have a good economical system when

your social arrangements are imperfect."[76] A deeply religious man, he saw the hand of God in History.[77] Ranade, however, had no faith in revolution, he believed in the slow process of assimilation and reform.[78]

A master of English literature, Ranade was an elegant essayist. He wrote in a robust style and direct manner. In support of the point a passage from his *Essays* may be quoted,

> "Indian condition can improve if the policy of let alone is given up and an active effort made in all directions to stimulate productions both of raw and manufactured products."[79]

The point may be reinforced by the following lines,

> "The natural resources are in unmeasured abundance and the natural demand is increasing every day in volume and urgency. Organised skill and direction are the only needs of the country, and these the Government possesses or can command in a way which makes it their duty to step in, and assist the development of local enterprise, for which the necessary capital will be forthcoming in this country."[80]

His writing adequately projects his earnest conviction and sturdy hopefulness. Shorn of embellishment his style is clear and vivid. Though he wrote long and complex sentences his prose is never clumsy and vague.

Ranade wrote at a time (1872-1899) when laissez faire had been tried and discarded in many countries of the west (Germany, France and the U.S.A.). Even in Great Britain many questioned its efficacy and even its theoretical foundations. They wanted fair trade in place of free trade. About this time the Government of India obstinately stuck to the discredited policy of laissez faire. Against this background Ranade's ideas on Indian econmy were being shaped. There is no doubt that 'these were largely influenced by continental experience and the economic policy of the Germans under Bismarck'.[81] The condition of India in 1890 was similar to that of Germany in eighteen forties. 'Agriculture and handicraft stage was the general condition and industrial capita-

lism was still in its infancy'. Cotton and Jute Mills were rapidly growing up. 'Paper Mills had commenced working and the pioneer attempts in manufacturing iron and steel had roused hopes in Ranade's mind. Dr. Watts' Report further strengthened his optimism and Ranade realised that the hopeful turn could be made effective by active direction and help from the state.'

Ranade pleaded for 'economic justice to the Indians as a body, not for justice between the classes'. He was perhaps not aware of the intensity of class conflict and tension in the society. Secondly, it appears that Ranade remained unaffected by the socialist ideas of his times. He gave his attention to the development of industries and commerce but ignored the dark side of industrial capitalism. Perhaps the first fruits of industrial revolution 'dazzled his eyes and made him blind to the social evils that might follow'.[82] Thirdly, Ranade could not rightly perceive the land tenure problems. In his youthful enthusiasm he was fighting a chivalrous and forlorn battle in defence of the landlord class and its previleges which he saw threatened by the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885. Even this Act could not adequately protect the rights of the ryots against the landlords. Fourthly, he was all praise for the Dutch Culture system in Java without being aware of 'the terrible suffering of a whole generation of peasants which was the price paid for the progress under that system'. Finally, 'Ranade began by criticising certain theories and economic assumptions and remained later an advocate of certain economic policies.' He failed to note the distinction "between economics as a scientific study in causation and economic policy as a method of procedure".[83]

Ranade may be ranked among the relativists in economics along with Roscher, Knies and Hildebrand. On the whole he had a right perception of the real state of Indian economy in the nineteenth century.[84] 'He was neither a theoretician working for a theory of Indian economics, nor a state socialist advocating planned economic growth, nor a dreamer of a welfare state.'[85] He was just a state paternalist visualising 'a limited role for the state in the sphere of pioneering new

enterprises and helping private efforts and thereby ushering in an age of industrial capitalism'. Ranade, unlike many of his co-workers, never allowed the economist in him to be influenced by the politician. A leading member of the optimistic school of Indian economics, 'he laid down the conditions of economic progress for India and showed a whole range of possible policy to achieve this progress'.[86] John H. Clapham defines economic history "as a branch of general institutional history, a study of the economic aspects of the social institutions of the past".[87] Viewed from this angle Ranade may justly be placed among the earliest nationalist economic historians of India.

III

A fine product of the nineteenth century Bengal Renaissance, Romesh Chandra Dutt was undoubtedly the most prominent, and perhaps the most successful, of a band of scholars who undertook to study the structure of colonial economy[88] in order to lay bare its nature of exploitation and the consequent impoverishment of India. Steeped in western ideas, history and culture, he came to Indian studies through advanced western methodology and techniques of investigation. English men of letters and ideas, Edward Gibbon, John Bright, Henry Fawcett, John Stuart Mill, Grant Duff, James Tod and Charles Dickens left deep impression on his mind and thought. Like many of his contemporary stalwarts, he was an admirer of Liberal Party and its policies and Gladtone was his ideal statesman.[89] The keynote of his varied career was an intense love for his country and people. Administrator, scholar and patriot, Romesh Chandra was one of the great figures of his generation.[90] Endowed with zeal, industry and critical acumen, he gave us a complete and connected account of the colonial phase of Indian economy supported by 'a wealth of data and statistical information'. Of course he was not a trained economist, nor was he closely familiar, unlike Ranade, with English and continental economic ideas. Neither 'had he any idea of the relativity of economic thinking[91] which

emanating from Germany in the early forties was agitating the scholarly world of Europe and America. Romesh Chandra, however, had a sharp intellect, deep insight, keen observation and a firm grasp of facts and figures. With these intellectual equipments he set about studying the Indian economic history of a century and a half and analysing its dominant trends.

Born in 1848 in the famous Rambagan Dutt family[92] of Calcutta, Romesh Chandra outshone many outstanding members of the family in brilliance and achievement. He stood first in the Entrance Examination of 1864 and passed into the Indian Civil Service in 1869, standing second in order of merit. Starting his civilian career as the Assistant Magistrate of Alipur, he rose to the position of a Divisional Commissioner, a rare achievement in those days. He voluntarily retired from the service in 1897, went to England and served for sometime as a lecturer in Indian history at the University College, London. The period from 1897 to 1904 was the most fruitful in his career. He undertook an enquiry into India's economic history during this period and prepared his famous work. From 1904 to the last day of his life (1909) Romesh Chandra served the Baroda State as the minister of the Maharaja. He presided over the Lucknow Session of the Indian National Congress in 1899 and the first Indian Industrial Conference at Benares in 1905.[93]

For thirty years (1874-1904) Romesh Chandra occupied himself with the economic history of India from the battle of Plassey to the dawn of the present century (1757-1900). The year 1874 witnessed his earliest contribution in the field, *The Peasantry of Bengal*, and in 1904 came out his *Economic History of India in the Victorian Age* (1837-1900). In between we have *England and India* (1897), five *Open Letters to Lord Curzon on Famines and Land Assessments in India* (1900), *Speeches and papers on Indian questions 1897-1900* (1902), *Speeches and papers on Indian questions 1901-1902* (1902), and *Economic History of India under Early British Rule (1757-1837)* (1902). He also wrote *a preface to Sir Philip Francis's minutes on the subject of a permanent settlement for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa* (1901).

Remesh Chandra's earliest writing, *The Peasantry of Bengal*, is a review of the condition of the Bengal ryots under the Hindu, Muhammedan and British rule. It also contains chapters on the administration of justice, village industry and taxation. Though an advocate of the permanent settlement as an institution ensuring social stability, peace and prosperity, he pleaded for "a permanent settlement between the Zamindar and the ryot as a permanent settlement has been inacted between the Zamindars and Government". But this, he suggested, should be done after a careful and extensive survey.[94] A short historical sketch, *England and India*, is a record of progress during hundred years of British rule in India, 1785-1885. It foreshadows many of the essential features of his *Economic History*—crushing poverty of the Indian people, recurring famines and a colonial policy. His five *Open Letters to Lord Curzon* on famines and land assessments, *Speeches and papers* on Indian questions (I & II) and *Preface to Philip Francis's minutes* on the Permanent Settlement were the preparatory notes for his magnum opus, the *Economic History of India* in two volumes.

The *Economic History of India under Early British Rule* traces the history of Indian economy from the battle of Plassey (1757) to the accession of Queen Victoria (1837). The period covered by this volume, the first eighty years of British rule in India, has been divided into three well-chosen parts. The first (1757-1785) was the age of Clive and Warren Hastings, an age of conquests and expansion which transformed a commercial company into a great political power in India. The second age (1785-1817) was that of Cornwallis, Wellesley and Lord Hastings, the era of the final overthrow of the power of Mysore and the Marathas which made the company the paramount power in India. The third period (1817-1837) was the age of Munro, Elphinstone and Bentinck—an epoch of peace and reforms. Along with the economic history of this period one gets an idea of the political development, administrative reforms and socio-economic forces that shaped the history of India in these formative years of the British Indian Empire. Unlike the first, the second volume, the *Economic History of*

India in the Victorian Age (1837-1900) is better planned and written. The entire period (1837-1900) has been studied under three heads—India under the Company (1837-1857), India under the Queen (1858-1876), and India under the Empress (1876-1900). The topics—land revenue and famines, manufactures, trade and tariff, railway and irrigation, finance, economic drain and currency question—have been traced uniformly in all the three periods into which the volume has been divided.

Romesh Chandra's *Economic History* is 'a fully documented piece of historical work'.[95] It is primarily based on parliamentary papers (Hansard), official reports, reports of the Commissions and enquiry committees, and minutes of evidence tendered before them. Romesh Chandra freely drew upon all available sources of information—standard histories, biographies, travel accounts, recollections and memoirs. Decennial reports on the moral and material progress and condition of India, Statistical Abstract relating to British India placed before Parliament and a huge mass of materials collected from settlement reports, administrative reports, settlement code, and revenue manuals were frequently used by him. Francis Buchanan Hamilton's report (South India) and Montogomery Martin's continuation (Eastern India) was another important source of his economic history. One serious gap in his approach to source materials was his failure to use census reports which were being published regularly since 1872.[96]

Land revenue and related agrarian problems got pride of place in Romesh Chandra's economic history. He considered land assessment, except in the permanently settled areas, excessive and uncertain. Excessive land tax, he argued, impeded agriculture and the prosperity of the people. He discovered a direct link between excessive land tax and recurring famines and found 'the remedy in fixing equitable limits to the state demand from the soil'.[97] His five *Open Letters* to Lord Curzon and again his reply to the Viceroy's famous resolution on land revenue (16th Jan. 1902) reveal his deep understanding of the land revenue problems and related agrarian questions of his times. Viewed from the standpoint of a nationalist historian, his basic assumptions on land revenue, except his occasional

outbursts over permanent settlement, appear to be sound. His five basic assumptions were as follows : (i) where the state received land revenue through landlords, and revenue was not permanently settled, he pleaded that the state demand be limited to one-half the rental, (ii) where state received land revenue direct from cultivators the rate be limited to a maximum of one-fifth the gross produce of the soil, (iii) increase of price be made the sole ground of enhancement at the time of settlement, (iv) Thirty years rule of settlement be followed where assessment was temporary, (v) that no cesses be imposed on the rental of the land except for purposes directly benefiting the land and that it must not exceed $6\frac{1}{4}\%$ on the rental in any province of India.[98]

With the loss of political independence India also lost her industrial and economic independence. She became the supplier of raw materials which the British industries required and demanded, a vast market for British goods and a field for profitable investment of British Capital.[99] India lost her old manufactures and home industries. One major gap in Romesh Chandra's economic history is that he did not pay much attention to the growing machine-based industries like Cotton Mills, Jute Mills, Paper Mills and mining of Coalfields that were making headway in the second half of the nineteenth century. The commercial policy of the British rulers came in for sharp criticism in his history. He rightly pointed out that the British Capitalist interest dictated the tariff policy of the Government of India. Abolition of import duties on cotton goods and an unjust excise duty on Indian cotton products were measures calculated not to promote Indian industries but to placate Lancashire and Manchester.[100] Manufacturing power of the people was first stamped out by protection against her industries, and then a free trade was imposed on her to prevent a revival.[101]

Romesh Chandra forcefully attacked the Government of India's policy of preferring railway construction to irrigation works. It is true, railways give a fillip and a momentum to industrialisation but in the absence of large-scale industrialisation in India, expansion of railways only served imperial

interests viz., defence, transport and communication and penetration of British goods in the interior of the country. What Romesh Chandra emphasised was that India, being an agricultural country, needed irrigation works more than railways.[102]

Romesh Chandra's analysis of the genesis of the public debt of India is acceptable even today without any major modification. After a careful study of the origins of the debt he came to the conclusion that the Indian debt was a myth. When the East India Company ceased to be rulers of India (1858) she was saddled with a debt of seventy millions which was unjust because all the costs of external war and even the cost of Indian conquests were put on her shoulders and the tribute of one hundred and fifty millions drawn from her by the company was conveniently forgotten.[103] This public debt shot up to two hundred and twenty four millions at the close of the century. This was due to military adventures, expansion of railways, interest on public debt, and civil and military charges incurred in England—the so-called home charges. Annual drain of twenty millions impoverished India and in support of his contention he quoted John Shore, John Sullivan, Holt Mackenzie, John Malcolm and John Wingate. His suggested remedies were equitable adjustment of financial relations between England and India, retrenchment and representation.[104] It is commonly held that Romesh Chandra did not pay much attention to 'the positive aspects of state policy' and action and that he could not properly comprehend the implications of development activities by the state and of the new forces which were likely to be generated in Indian economy. The critic should bear in mind that he was discussing colonial economics and as such he was not prepared to allow the colonial state to increase and widen its activities. Hence the demand for retrenchment finance. With twenty millions regularly going out of the country every year (and no return in any form) a nationalist leader could not be expected

> "to advocate a high expenditure level of a colonial state with increased tax burden for already impoverished people and the latter having no share in the control and direction of that expenditure."[105]

Only major drawback in his economic analysis was that he could not understand, like many of his contemporary economists, the full import of deficit financing. When the value of silver fell after 1870, the Government of India decided to meet the increased burden by raising the value of the rupee by means of additional taxation in India instead of suggesting a reduction of the home charges.[106] As expected Romesh Chandra raised his voice against this artificial manipulation of the currency.

Romesh Chandra had almost all the requisite qualities of a true historian—a searching spirit, power of assimilation, wide range of knowledge and a literary gift. His greatest drawback was that he started from a pre-conceived notion. 'He was out to prove certain basic assumptions formulated beforehand and then hunted up materials in order to substantiate them. In his economic history one feels throughout the presence of a set of pre-conceived ideas.' In many of his pages the true historian in him yielded place to the able advocate and sometimes he pleaded for 'the adoption of certain lines of economic policy'.[107] His three basic assumptions were : (i) Permanent Settlement of the land revenue of Bengal was the single act of the British Government which had done much for the prosperity and well-being of the people. Bengal cultivators were more prosperous, more resourceful, and better able to help themselves in years of bad harvest than cultivators in any other part of India,[108] (ii) The Public debt of India was unfair and unjust and that it was the result of inequitable distribution of charges between the imperial country and her colony and the continuous flow of tribute to the ruling power, (iii) The British Government, East India Company and then India Government made a deliberate attempt to destroy the indigenous manufactures and home industries of India.

A master of literary prose, Romesh Chandra wrote in a beautiful, elegant style. His facile pen makes his narration and argument 'vivacious and forceful'.[109] The ease, grace and vigour of his language render his works engaging and pleasant reading. His lively style is a true projection of his personality,

vigorous mind and broad vision. What he believed sincerely was forcefully represented in his writings. The following is an instance,

> "The real solution of the Indian economic problem lies in relieving agriculture from excessive and uncertain taxation; in fostering those indigenous industries in which millions of Indian artisans find employment in their villages; and in helping those nascent manufactures which the people are starting with their own capital in towns. The people of India welcome the employment of British capital for the development of mineral resources and the new industries of India. But British statesmen view things through a false perspective when the interests of British capitalist in India loom larger in their eyes than the interests of agriculture, and of those humbler industries on which the Indian nation, as a nation, depends for its existence."[110]

His narrative, however, suffers from one serious deficiency. As he had British readers always in mind, he quoted in order to convince them, long passages from official records and parliamentary papers. The result is a mass of original materials put together in his history 'at the cost of theme and narration'. Besides, high-flown language was the literary fashion of the age. Romesh Chandra, though much restrained, had a tendency to write in flamboyant, if not ornate, language.

A true scholar, aware of the limits of abstract argumentation, Romesh Chandra had developed an historical approach and followed this method in his study of the economic history of India. He was not an abstract theoretician nor did he discuss the theoretical side of economic history. He had no love for systematisation and classification.[111] Though he kept away from theoretical postures and formulations he knew some basic assumptions of economic history viz., interdependence of political and economic forces, interlink between economic interest and policy etc. True to his historical method Romesh Chandra took account of changing circumstances, of variations due to changes in time and place and accordingly revised his opinion and formulations.[112]

Romesh Chandra was first and foremost a philosopher

and therefore he took a broad and philosophic view of economic development. In his view the true history of the people is the story of their material and moral condition, their trades, industries and agriculture. "No study is more interesting and instructive in the history of nations than the study of the material condition of the people from age to age."[113] Secondly, according to him, economic laws are the same in Asia and Europe. These are constant and unvarying in their operation.[114] Deeply engrossed with unfolding the historical development of Indian economy, Romesh Chandra, unlike Ranade, was not aware of the relativity of economic thinking—varying conditions and stages of economic growth requiring variation in principles. Thirdly, following John Stuart Mill he came to have a firm conviction that "government of one people by another can never improve the lot of the governed".[115] Fourthly, he had a fine understanding of the basis of national economy. According to him, agriculture, manufactures, trades and a sound finance are the sources of wealth in all countries.[116] Lastly, Romesh Chandra had an abiding faith in the idea of progress. The story of civilisation reveals this progress. "It is national life to pursue great and worthy objects; it is national death to stand still and stagnate."[117]

Recurring famines in the last quarter of the nineteenth century were the immediate motive and real impulse behind undertaking the study of economic history of India by men like Naoroji, Ranade and Dutt.[118] A moderate of the unorthodox type, Romesh Chandra chose to tell the economic story of British India in order to expose the deepseated causes of the poverty of the people. His economic history is a critical review of, and a scathing attack on, the entire British rule in India. His work provided the economic ideology of the emerging extremist outlook in Indian politics. Romesh Chandra, like many of his class, encouraged economic swadeshi as an effective means of economic well-being. His economic history contains the charter of demands—popular participation in the control and direction of administration, self-government, representation in the councils, Indianisation of the services, separation of the executive from the judiciary etc.—which the moderate

leadership in the Indian National Congress pressed on the Government from 1885 to 1905.

The most glaring shortcoming in Romesh Chandra's economic history was his unjustified glorification of, and undue emphasis on, the permanent settlement of land revenue.

> "No single act of the British Government that can be named has done so much for the prosperity and well being of the people as the permanent settlement of the land revenue of Bengal effected by Lord Cornwallis in 1793."[119]

With the zeal of a convert he persistently advocated the extension of the permanent settlement to the areas where other types of land revenue system (ryotwari system in Madras and Bombay, Mahalwari system in North India) prevailed. Himself an experienced administrator, Romesh Chandra, however, failed to perceive the real problem involved in the permanent settlement. It was the problem of intermediaries between the Government and the actual cultivators. A ryot could easily create underryots and thus the exploited could easily become an exploiter.[120] Again he spoke of rural prosperity following in the wake of permanent settlement of land revenue in Bengal.[121] The peasantry as a class had no significant share in this prosperity. Only the Zamindars and intermediaries shared the economic cake among themselves. Secondly, Romesh Chandra did not pay much attention to the problems of industrialisation in India. Writing at the close of the century he failed to notice the growing labour problem and inadequate labour laws. Cotton and Jute mills, Coal mines and Tea gardens employed a vast mass of labourers who received only a casual reference from his pen.[122] The co-operative societies that were being set up at this time also failed to draw his attention. Thirdly, Romesh Chandra, like Dadabhai, could not rightly locate all forms of economic drain. He could not properly comprehend the deeper implications of British Capital investment in the growing Jute and Tea industries and remittance of their profit to England. Another source of economic drain not mentioned in his history was the exploitation of cheap Indian labour by the British Capital.[123]

Almost three quarters of a century have elapsed since

Romesh Chandra wrote his two volumes of economic history. So far he has not found his successor. A work worth the name of economic history of India has not yet come out. Only some regional studies or studies on some particular aspects of Indian economic history have been made so far. Despite its shortcomings, Romesh Chandra's economic history still holds the ground as the only work on the subject. Written on the lines of traditional economic historians it includes, besides economic history, a study of political, administrative, social and institutional history. 'This inter-disciplinary bent has of course precluded a high degree of specialisation and thoroughness.' It is essential that an economic historian should be guided by economic theory in interpreting his data. There is almost a total absence of theory in Romesh Chandra's economic history. With all these faults his work, however, still remains unrivalled. India has not yet produced her Clapham. Romesh Chandra's unique position as the foremost economic historian of India has remained unchallenged.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. **Bhabatosh Datta,** *Evolution of Economic Thinking in India*, p. 5.

2. **Bipan Chandra**, *Presidential Address*, Modern India Section, I.H.C., Jabalpur, 1970.

3. **B. N. Ganguli,** *Dadabhai Naoroji and the Drain Theory*, Introduction viii. The present generation of economic historians of India (Tapan Roy Chaudhuri, Bipan Chandra, Irfan Habib, D. Morris and others) has called for 'a re-interpretation of the nineteenth century Indian economic history' in the pages of journals like *Indian Economic and Social History Review, Journal of Economic History, Social Scientist* etc. The first generation was much involved emotionally in the subject of its study. It has been possible for the present generation to take a more detached and scientific view of the subject.

4. Dadabhai Naoroji, *The Days of my youth*, quoted in R. P. Masani's Dadabhai Naoroji, The Grand Old Man of India. Dadabhai had a long life 1825-1917.

5. B. Datta, op. cit., p. 6. Dadabhai was a moderate in politics. He wanted radical reforms in political, economic and social spheres through peaceful, constitutional means. He admired British love for freedom, justice and fair play. Only late in life his faith in British sense of justice received a severe jolt.

6. Ibid., p. 9.

7. Long before Dadabhai entered the field Drain Theory was well-known. Edmund Burke first talked of drainage in his famous Ninth Report (1783).

8. R. P. Masani, op. cit., p. 211.

9. His name is Dadabhai Naoroji Dordi. British people mistakenly called him Naoroji which is his father's name. His father's full name is Naoroji Palanji Dordi.

10. Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India*, (hereafter referred to as Poverty) Introduction ii.

11. Ibid.. p. 2.

12. Cama was Dadabhai's attorney to look after his business in England during his absence.

13. B. Datta, op. cit., p. 7. Lack of reliable statistics stood in the way of a quantitative assessment of the economic life of the people at the end of the 19th century, vide *History of Hunger* by Nabagopal Das, The Statesman, Dec. 3, 1977.

14. B. Datta, op. cit., p. 9.

15. Dadabhai calculated taking the production of the year 1867-68 as his base.

16. *Poverty*, Introduction viii, p. 25, Bipan Chandra, *Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India*, p. 648.

17. B. N. Ganguli, op. cit., p. 13.

18. Ibid., p. 118.

19. B. Datta, op. cit., p. 8. and Poverty, p. 31.

20. *Speeches and Writings of Dadabhai Naoroji*, pp. 232, 250, 294, 315, 384-86, 389, 616.

21. *Poverty*, p. 27.

22. Bipan Chandra, op. cit., p. 636.

23. *Poverty*, pp. 194-95.

24. *Poverty*, pp. 194-95.

25. C. L. Parekh ed. *Essays, Speeches, addresses and writings of Dadabhai Naoroji*, p. 118.

26. From the *Daily News*, 5th Nov. 1886. Quoted in C. L. Parekh ed. op. cit., p. 517.

27. Ibid , p. 520. The Times, 23rd Dec. 1886.

28. M. K. Gandhi, *Foreword to Masani's biography.*

29. *Poverty*, p. 141.

30. Dadabhai and Hyndman often exchanged views and discussed problems of India and of the working people all over the world. He also came into contact with Herbert Spencer, J. S. Mill and Thomas Carlyle.

31. B. N. Ganguli, op cit., p. 147.

32. Dadabhai attended the International Socialist Congress held at

Amsterdam in August, 1904, and delivered an interesting speech which was reproduced in the *India* of 2 Sept., 1904.

33. B. N. Ganguli, op. cit., p. 147.

34. C. L. Parekh ed. op. cit., p. 25.

35. R. P. Masani, op. cit., p. 189.

36. C. L. Parekh ed. op. cit., p. 163.

37. P. K. Gopalakrishnan, *Development of Economic Ideas in India*, p. 91.

38. *Poverty*, p. 62. Dadabhai thought that free trade between England and India would be something like a race between a starving, exhausting invalid and a strong man with a horse to ride on.

39. *Congress Presidential Addresses*, p. 863.

40. Masani, op. cit., p. 10.

41. Dadabhai was a founding member of the Indian National Congress. He presided over its annual sessions thrice (1886. 1893, 1906).

42. *Poverty*, p. 659.

43. Masani, op. cit., p. 122.

44, *Poverty*, p. 652.

45. *Financial Administration of India*—addressed to the Select Committee on East India Finance. Quoted in C. L. Parekh ed. op. cit., p. 108, 138. Also see Dadabhai's speech at Kinnington published in *India* of Nov. 30th, 1900.

46. *Naoroji's Speeches*, p. 671.

47. G. A. Mankar, *A sketch of the Life and Works of the late Mr. Justice M. G. Ranade*, Vol. I, Preface 3.

48. B. Datta, op. cit., p. 9.

49. T. V. Parvate, *Mahadev Govind Ranade*, p. 28. Introduction of western education and ideas and consequent changes in society and religion.

50. B. Datta, Background of Ranade's economics, Indian Journal of Economics, Vol. XXII, Jan. 1942.

51. Ramabai Ranade, *Ranade : his wife's Reminiscences*, Ranade died on 16th Jan., 1901.

52. (1) Indian political economy, (2) The reorganisation of real credit in India, (3) Netherlands, India, and the culture system, (4) Present state of Indian manufactures and outlook of the same, (5) Indian foreign emigration, (6) Iron industry-pioneer attempts, (7) Industrial Conference, (8) Twenty year's review of census statistics, (9) Local Govt. in England and India, (10) Emancipation of serfs in Russia (11) Prussian land legislation and the Bengal Tenancy Bill, (12) The law of land sale in British India.

53. All these articies, published in the Sarbajanik Sabha Journal, were anonymous but attributed to Ranade by his contemporary biographer G. A. Mankar, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 213-217.
(1) Famine Administration in the Bombay Presidency (Vol. I, No. I),

(2) Agrarian problem and its solution (Vol. II, No. I), (3) The Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Bill (Vol. I, No. 2), (4) Review of Mr. Fawcett's Three Essays on Indian Finance (Vol. III, No. I), (5) Sir William Wedderburn and his critics on a permanent settlement for the Deccan (Vol. III, No. 3), (6) Central Provinces, Land revenue and Tenancy Bills (Vol. III, No. 4), (7) Parliamentary Committee on Indian Public Works (Vol. IV, No. I), (8) Review of Free Trade and English Commerce by Augustus Mongredien and of Sir Louis Mallet's letter on Reciprocity (Vol. IV, No. I), (9) Land law reforms and Agricultural Banks (Vol. IV, No. 2), (10) Review of Dadabhai Naoroji's supplementary letter on the Poverty of India (Vol. IV, No. 4), (11) Forest Conservation in the Bombay Presidency (Vol. V, No. 3), (12) Proposed Reforms in the Assessment (Vol. VI, No. 3), (13) Protest against new departure of Govt. in Land Policy (Vol. VI, No. 4), (14) Economic Reserves or the Public Works Policy (Vol. VI. No. I), (15) Decentralisation of Indian Finance (Vol. XVI, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4).

54. Copy of these two lectures is not traceable. We have only reference to them in Parvatet's biography, pp. 76-77.

55. *The Miscellaneous writings of Ranade*. Ranade is also a political historian in his own right. His *Rise of the Maratha Power* (1900) is a work of considerable merit.

56. B. Datta, op. cit., p. 14.

57, Mankar, op, cit., pp. 221-222.

58. Ramabai Ranade, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

59. Ranade's *Essays on Indian Economics* (2nd ed.), Preface.

60. Sir J. C. Coyajee, *Ranade's work as an economist. Indian Journal of Economics*, Vol. XXII, Jan. 1942.

61. Ranade, *Essays*, Preface.

62. Ranade, *Essays*, p. 2.

63. Ibid., p. 9. These were laid down by the earlier economists like Adam Smith, Ricardo, Senior, James Mill, M'Culloch and Malthus. These assumptions are : (1) National economy is essentially individualistic and has no separate collective aspect. (2) The idea of economic man and his self-interest. (3) Self-interest is best promoted by the largest production of wealth. (4) Pursuit of private gain by each individual promotes best the general good. (5) Free and unlimited competition of individuals is the only safe and natural regulator. (6) All customary and state regulation is an encroachment on natural liberty. (7) Every individual knows best his interest and has the capacity and desire of acting according to this knowledge. (8) There is perfect freedom and equality in the power of contract between individuals and individuals. (9) Capital and labour are always free and ready to move from one employment to another where better remuneration is expected. (10) There is a universal tendency of profits and wages to seek a common level. (11) Population tends to outstrip the means of [illegible]

sistence, and (12) Demand and supply always tend mutually to adjust each other.

64. B. Datta. op. cit., p. 15.

65. The orthodox economists assign to the backward torrid zone regions of Asia the duty of producing raw materials and claim for the advanced European temperate zone countries the work of manufactures and transport.

66. T. V. Parvate, op. cit., p. 77.

67. Ranade believed that to ask the British Government to do full justice to India in the economic sphere, e.g. stoppage of economic drain, protective tariffs on imports etc., would amount to asking them to withdraw from India. Vide *Poona Speeches* (1872-73).

68. Bipan Chandra, op. cit., p. 674.

69. Ranade, Essays. p. 132.

70. B. Datta, loc. cit.

71. B. Datta, op. cit , pp. 14-15.

72. Ranade, *Essays*, p. 34.

73. D. G. Karve, *Ranade and Economic Planning*, Indian Journal of Economics, Jan. 1942. Karve erroneously holds the view that Ranade was the supporter of state socialism.

74. Sir J. C. Coyajee loc. cit.

75. M. M. Bhattacharjee, *Speeches and Writings of Eminent Indians*, p. 206.

76. Ranade, *Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 231.

77. G. K. Gokhale, On Ranade, Quoted in *Speeches and Writings of Eminent Indians*, pp. 64-65.

78. T. N. Jagadisan ed., *The Wisdom of a Modern Rishi : Writings and Speeches of M. G. Ranade*, p. 171.

79. Ranade, *Essays*, p. 30.

80. Ibid., p. 192.

81. B. Datta, loc. cit.

82. B. Datta, loc. cit.

83. Ibid.

84. B. Datta, *R. C. Dutt and Economic History of India*, *Visva Bharati Patrika* (Bengali), Baisakh-Asad. 1360 B.S.

85. M. C. Chagla, *Introduction to Parvate's biography*. Also see B. Datta and D. G. Karve. loc. cit.

86. P. K. Gopalakrishnan, op. cit., p. 95.

87. *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences*, Vol. V, p. 327.

88. D. R. Gadgil, *Introduction* to *Economic History of India under Early British Rule*.

89. *Speeches and Papers on Indian Questions* 1897-1900, p. 46. (See also his speech at the condolence meeting for Gladstone).

90. Gadgil, ibid.

91. *The National System of Political Economy* by *Friedrich List*.

92. The Rambagan Dutt family of Calcutta was well-known for its catholicity of outlook, mastery of English and western culture. The notable members of this family were Nilmani Dutt, Rasamoy Dutt, Ishan Chandra Dutt (Romesh Chandra's father), Toru Dutt and Soshi Chandra Dutta.

93. For his biographical details the following may be consulted, (i) J. N. Gupta, *Life and Works of R. C. Dutt*, (ii) J. C. Bagal, *Introduction to Ramesh Rachanabali*, Sahitya Sansad, 1960, (iii) Sisir Kumar Haldar, *A man of the people, The Statesman*, 19th Aug., 1973, (iv) *Obituary notice in the Bengalee*, 1, Dec. 1909, (v) Sister Nivedita, *Ramesh Chandra Dutt, Modern Review*, Jan. 1910.

94. *The Peasantry of Bengal*, p. 83.

95. Gadgil, op. cit., xii & xiii.

96. B. Datta, *R. C. Dutt and Economic History of India.*

97. R. C. Dutt, *Preface to Philip Francis's Minutes on Permanent Settlement. xv.*

98. R. C. Dutt, *Open Letters*, pp. 78-80.

99. R. C. Dutt, *Economic History* Vol. I, p. 197. cf. J. A. Hobson's *Imperialism : A study* (1902).

100. R. C. Dutt, *Economic History* Vol. II, Preface, pp. 293-304, 386, 392, 394-395, 397.

101. R. C. Dutt, *Economic History*, Vol. I, p. 216.

102. Gadgil, *Introduction.*

103. R. C. Dutt, Vol. II, Preface xi & xii, Vol. I, p. 298.

104. R. C. Dutt, Vol, I, pp. 293, 298, Vol. II, pp. 448-449.

105. Gadgil, *Introduction.*

106. R. C. Dutt, Vol. II, p. 423.

107. B. Datta, *Evolution*, p. 10.

108. R. C. Dutt, *Speeches and Papers*, I, p. 15 and *Open Letters*, p. 59.

109. P. K. Gopalakrishnan, op. cit., p. 144, and B, Datta, *Evolution* p. 10.

110. R. C. Dutt, Economic History, Vol. II, p. 385.

111. P. K. Gopalakrishnan, op. cit., p. 145.

112. For example, Romesh Chandra's attitude towards the *Bengal Tenancy Acts of 1859 and 1885* may be cited.

113. R. C. Dutt, Vol. I, pp. 69, 140.

114. R. C. Dutt, Vol. II, Preface xiii & *Speeches and Papers* II, p. 36.

115. R. C. Dutt, Vol. II, Preface xiii, pp. 156, 451.

116. R. C. Dutt. *Speeches* II, p. 37.

117. R. C. Dutt, Vol. I, Preface and Romesh Chandra's article *Unnatir yug* (in Bengali) (Age of Progress) in Nikhil Sen ed. Romesh Chandra Dutta, *Prabandha Sankalan*, pp 53-57.

118. Nabagopal Das, loc. cit., India was visited by 18 famines of varying intensity between 1880 and 1900, in which 19 million lives were lost.

119. R. C. Dutt, *Speeches* I. p. 15.

120. B. Datta, *Evolution*, p. 12. In some places there were as many as fifty intermediaries between the Govt. and the actual tiller of the soil.

121. R. C. Dutt, *Speeches I*, p. 15 and *Eco. History Vol. II*, p. 335.

122. R. C. Dutt, Vol. II, pp. 255, 380, 381.

123. B. Datta, *R. C. Dutt and Economic History of India.*

Chapter Five

MULTI-DIMENSIONAL SCHOOL OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL HISTORIANS

I

Just as Henry Thomas Buckle has given a brilliant sketch of cultural and intellectual development in England,[1] K. A. Nilakanta Sastri has made a scholarly survey of the panorama of South Indian history—its politics, society and institutions, religion and philosophy, art and literature, close connections with foreigners and foreign lands and rich cultural heritage of the people A long and disciplined life devoted to the study of South Indian history and culture, Sastri initiated and developed the study of that history on objective and scientific lines, uncovering many unknown facts and putting the stray bits of information into well-knit historical narrative. His scholarship, industry, and above all, his intimate connection with the land and people give to his historical writings a distinct stamp of his own. His concept of history is so wide that it includes every aspect of the life of humanity.[2] It is not only the chronicle of kings or the wars they waged, it also includes material condition, social institutions, philosophy and religion, art and literature. Fully in keeping with his idea of history Nilakanta Sastri made a detailed study of South Indian past from the earliest times to the fall of Vijayanagar Empire in the seventeenth century. He has not only helped build up the broad outlines of the history of peninsular India but has done more than anybody else in bringing out the multi-coloured and fascinating cultural life and cultural movements of the people of South India in historical times. His volumes contain a mass of new materials unknown till his time, giving solid support to his writings and lighting up many a dark corner of South Indian history. His entire corpus of writings, brilliant and varied as it is, establishes him as the leading historian of South India.

Born in 1892 at Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, Nilakanta Sastri was a bright student of history at the University of Madras. Fairly equipped in Indian languages, particularly South Indian, Sastri learnt Dutch and French to study South-East Asian history.[3] He served for sometime as teacher of history at Tirunelveli and Benares before settling down as the principal of Sri Meenakshi College, Chidambaram, (Tamil Nadu, now the core of Annamalai University). In 1929 he was appointed the Professor of Indian history and archaeology of the University of Madras. After his retirement from the University Sastri became, a few years later, the Professor of Indology in the University of Mysore. Then he held the post of Director of the Institute of Traditional Cultures in Tamil Nadu (sponsored by the UNESCO). As the visiting professor at the University of Chicago he delivered a series of lectures on South Indian history.[4] A long and well-lived life came to an end in 1975.

Nilakanta Sastri is a prolific writer contributing a considerable amount to Indian historical literature. His volumes may be classified into five categories according to their form and content.

A. His major works whose dominant trait is political, (i) *The Pandyan Kingdom* (1929), (ii) *Studies in Cola History and Administration* (1932), (iii) *The Colas I & II* (1935, 1937, one volume 1955), (iv) *The Tamil Kingdoms of South India* (1948), (v) *History of Srivijaya* (1949), (vi) *History of India* (three parts, 1950, revised edition, *Advanced History of Inaia*, 1970), (vii) *A History of S uth India* (1955), (viii) *The Culture and history of the Tamils* (1964), (ix) *India--a Historical Survey* (1966), (revised edition : *Life and Culture of the Indian people*, 1974).[5]

B. Works on cultural and social history, (i) *Gleanings on Social life from the Avadanas* (1945), (ii) *South Indian influences in the Far East* (1949), (iii) *Dravidian Literatures* (1949), (iv) *Cultural Expansion of India* (1959), (v) *Development of Religion in South India* (1963), (vi) *Cultural Contacts between Aryans and Dravidians* (1967), (vii) *Sangam Literature—its cults and cultures* (1972).

C. Edited works, (i) F. Max Muller's *India—What can it teach*

us ? (1934), (ii) *Some documents on the History of Cochin* (1939), (iii) *Foreign notices of South India* (1939), (iv) *Further Sources of Vijayanagara History*, 3 vols. (1946),[6] (v) *The age of the Nandas and Mauryas* (1952), (vi) *A Comprehensive History of India* (Vol. II, 1957), (vii) *A great liberal : Speeches and writings of Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyar* (1965), (viii) *India as seen in the Bṛhat Samhita of Barahamihira*, (ix) Joint editor of *B. C. Law Memorial volume* (1946),

D. Works on methodology, (i) *Historical method in relation to problems of South Indian Hisory*, (1941), (ii) Lectures on *factors in Indian History* (1949), (iii) *Historical Method in relation to Indian History* (1956), (iv) *Sources of Indian History* (1961),

E. Some minor writings and stray historical articles, (i) *The concept of a secular state*, (ii) *Agastya*, (iii) *Alexander's Campaign against Porus*, (iv) *Nalanda*, (v) *Tirumala Naik*, *Portuguese and the Dutch*, (iv) *Southern India*, *Arabia and Africa*, (vii) *South India*, (viii) *Presidential Address*, Indian History Congress, Patna, 1946 and (ix) South India and South-East Asia (1977)—a collection of twenty eight research articles.

The earliest to come out of the pen of the historian was *The Pandyan Kingdom*. It was an enlarged version of a series of lectures the author delivered on the subject at the University of Madras in 1926. With the materials available at that time it was not possible to attempt a full and satisfactory account of the Pandyan Kingdom.[7] However, he made the best of a bad job with the help of literature, epigraphy, archaeology, numismatics and foreign accounts. Still much remains to be done before the history of the Pandyas can be fully understood. *Studies in Cola History and Administration* may justly be called a preparatory volume for his more famous and scholarly work, *The Colas*. The volumes[8] contain not only the political history of the Colas but also a fair account of their government, local administration, taxation, finance, population, social divisions, standard of life, agriculture and land tenures, industry and trade, coins, weights and measures, education and learning, religion and literature. One curious omission is that Cola art does not find a place in [illegible]

small book *The Tamil Kingdoms of South India* and *The Culture and History of the Tamils* give an excellent summary review of Tamil Kingdoms (Chera, Cola and Pandyan), government, socio-economic conditions, religion, literature and fine art. *History of Srivijaya* or the Sumatran Kingdom of the Sailendras which flourished between the seventh and thirteenth centuries A.D. was the theme of Sir Willam Meyer lectures the author delivered at the University of Madras in 1946-47. With remarkable modesty the author admits that the history of Srivijaya is not fully documented and that "there is scope for wide divergence of views at many points of the story".[9] Sastri has written quite a few text books of Indian history which are primarily based on published sources and works of earlier authors in the field. Of these *A History of South India* (from pre-historic times to the fall of Vijayanagar) deserves more than a passing reference. It is true that it gives only a connected narrative of ascertained facts. It does not make any new discovery nor does it throw any light on some obscure points of South Indian history. But one striking feature of the volume is that Sastri has cut a clear path in the tangled forests of South Indian history and takes the reader along safely with him amidst falling of Kingdoms and clash of arms. Further, it is somewhat unconventional in the sense it reflects the true history of the life of the people and their cultural movements.

Gleanings on Social life from the Avadanas is a collection of data on social life from two of the earliest known works of this class of Buddhist literature—Divyavadana and Avadana-Sataka (c 100—150 A.D.). In *South Indian Influences in the Far East* his objective was to study the art and social life at the early stage of Hindu colonization of the East with a view to estimating the role of Southern India in their evolution.[10] In his view influences from other parts of India which flowed into the area were weaker and less persistent than those from South India.[11] *Cultural Expansion of India* (Banikanta Kakati Memorial Lectures, University of Gauhati, 1956) is an attempt to find out Indian elements in the cultural make-up of other countries, particularly those of Eastern

Europe, Near East, Middle East, Central Asia, China, Indo-China and Indonesia. Though the attempt is commendable, its historical foundation is not very strong, for there is lack of positive evidence on the subject. *Dravidian Literatures* is a small booklet of only fortyeight pages giving general readers a short but compact outline of the chronology and content of the literatures in the principal languages (Tamil, Telegu, Kannada, and Malayalam) of South India. *Sangam Literature—its cults and cultures* is an account of the earliest Tamil literature known to us. It camprises more than two thousand poems which help create pen-picture of polity, society and economy. *Development of Religion in South India* contains the series of seven lectures the author delivered at the University of Chicago in 1959. From the integration of cults and the beginning of Hinduism to the present day reform and modernisation formed the theme of discussion. *Cultural Contacts between Aryans and Dravidians* is a course of four lectures the author gave at the University of Patna in 1964. He is of the view that the Aryan-Dravidian contacts were friendly. The view put forward by some scholars[12] that there was invasion and the Dravidians were pushed out of Northern India has, Sastri suggests, no real basis.

Of his edited works the most important are two volumes of Indian history, *The Age of the Nandas and Mauryas* and *A Comprehensive History of India* (Vol. II). Sponsored by the the Bharatiya Itihas Parishad the first volume contains eleven chapters of which five are Sastri's contribution. The second volume covers the history of the Mauryas and Satavahanas (325 B.C. to 300 A.D.), greater stress being laid on cultural movemets and social institutions.[13] Sastri has compiled and edited a few source books of South Indian history. Of these mention may be made of. *Further Sources of Vijayanagar History*, 3 vols, *Some documents on the History of Cochin* and *Foreign notices of South India*. In the spirit of a genuine scholar of history Sastri has not only discovered and used new sources but has given them a systematic form for the benefit of future scholars in the field.

In his study of methodological problems, Sastri has

enunciated a few general principles of historical studies. Then he has drawn attention to some problems of South Indian history and finally dealt with certain special problems of the study of South Indian history.[14] Of his minor writings and stray articles two may be mentioned—*The Concept of a Secular State* and his *Presidential Address* at the ninth session of the Indian History Congress held at Patna in 1946. The former is a booklet containing the history of secularism in India and the latter gives his views on historical scholarship.

History, according to Sastri, is a scientific discipline in which the students should be ready to go wherever his evidence leads him.[15] In dealing with the history of South India Sastri scrupulously followed the principle stated above and maintained all along a high standard of professional honesty. He knew it well that in a conflict between pre-conceived idea and historical documents, usually the former prevails with disastrous results for historical scholarship.[16] He took care to avoid that danger and did not allow prevalent theories or formulations to influence his judgment. Usually Sastri drew upon five categories of sources—literary evidence, archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics and accounts of foreign travellers. In conformity with the cannons of historiography he did not take his sources at face value. Rather he verified the authenticity of his sources from different angles before using them in his history. He knew that the historian legitimately indulges in an act of creative imagination. But that is to be done within certain limits and in no case 'the historian should allow the present to dominate the past and turn history into a hand-maid of politics'.[17] It is true history is intrinsically far more complex than the more objective realms dealt with by the sciences. Still the proper task of an historian, Sastri feels, is to interpret the past for the present. He must not interpret the past with the present, nor should he carry the present into the past. Sastri held himself close to the texts and other categories of sources and interpreted them with impartiality and honesty.

Nilakanta Sastri boldly challenges the view held by many in the South that the people of the peninsula are the authors

of Indus Civilization. In the absence of authentic and positive evidence, Sastri holds, nothing can be said definitely about it. He rejects the contention of the Tamilians, born out of narrow Tamil nationalism, that the people of the South are the original inhabitants of India. He is rather inclined to accept the view that the Dravidians, like the Aryans, came to India from outside, probably from central Asia and eastern mediterranean region.[18] He does not agree with the view that the Aryan penetration into the South was superficial and that it did not affect the life style of the people. On the contrary, Aryanisation of South India, he believes, represented a happy blending of Aryan and Dravidian elements, a synthesis of two cultural ethos.[19] He sees the colonization of South-East Asia "as just a continuation of the process by which the Deccan and South India were Aryanised and Hinduised by the inflow of northern influences".[20] Sastri has the insight of a social historian. Thus he explains the social structure of the South in the days of the Colas : "Caste was the basis of social organisation.. each caste was more or less a hereditary occupational group with an active organisation for the regulation and protection of its economic and social interests ; and the Indian society of those days is best conceived as a loose federation of strong self-regulating groups which shared a common background of social rights and obligations which made for mutual understanding and accommodation."[21] He is, however, silent on the problem of caste conflict or other social injustices like untouchability or unapproachability.

Nilakanta Sastri was good at narration and drawing portrait of historical figures. Endowed with critical spirit and creative imagination he narrates the results of Aryan penetration into the South :

"The results of Aryan penetration into the South were more cultural than racial and the pre-Aryan inhabitants survived the 'conquest' in sufficient strength to retain their own language and many of their old habits and methods of life, with the consequence that the resulting culture was a real blend of the Aryan and Dravidian elements which shows several points of difference from the culture of the

remaining parts of India which were more thoroughly Aryanised."[22]

As a consummate artist he describes the mission of the Hindu colonists :

"Just as the Greek colonists carried to their new home fire from the hearth of the home city, so the Hindu colonists carried with them an organised culture based on four easily identifiable elements viz., a conception of royalty, Sanskrit as the means of literary expression, a mythology drawn from the Veda, epics and puranas, and a sociology based on the observance of the Dharmasastras, particularly the law of Manu."[23]

Like Macaulay, Sastri emphasized the importance of the art of narration. Without the power of narration, he thought, history would be 'dry as dust'. The following is a single sentence pen-portrait of Krishnadeva Raya, the King of Vijayanagar, "Pre-eminent as a warrior, Krishnadeva Raya was equally great as statesman, administrator, and patron of the arts".[24]

As the task of history, according to Sastri, is to reveal the past as it was and to explain the evolution of the present state of things from the past,[25] there is no place for a model or schema in his idea of history. Elsewhere he writes that the historian must be free from bias. The historian, like a scientist, 'has to have a mind which is free from pre-occupation, which is free from theories and is ready to take in all the bits of evidence, and appraise each such bit at its proper worth'.[26] Though he resents north-centred historical writing in modern India, and argues very rightly that the South is not sufficiently represented in Indian history, Sastri has no bitter feeling against the North, nor does he advocate a reprisal or encourage narrow regionalism for the South.[27] Since he mainly dealt with the history and culture of the South, he took care to avoid isolationism and chauvinism in his writings. He has no sympathy for narrow Tamil nationalism that now prevails in the South.[28] Sastri has, however, one bias. He has an exalted notion about the impact of Indian civilization in the countries of Asia and in the world. As he writes : "Time was when Asia led the world in civilization and culture, and India led Asia".[29]

Finally, his failure to explain the rigid caste rules, the resultant caste conflicts and social tension they generate, his silence on social problems like untouchability and unapproachability have brought on the head of the historian the odium of being biased in favour of the orthodox Hindus.[30]

For Nilakanta Sastri, as for all scientific and objective historians, history is a search for truth. For this purpose his methodology included the study of all primary sources—literary evidence (all documentary evidence), archaeology, numismatics, epigraphy and accounts of foreign travellers. He acted upon the principle that all historical raw materials were to be rigorously scrutinised and tested before use. It also included the principle that present passions were not to be forced upon the past because it leads to the distortion of the past.[31] Another aspect of his methodology was that the historian must go wherever his materials take him.[32] He compares the role of the historian with that of the chemist.[33] Just as the chemist finds his facts in experiments minutely conducted, the historian seeks and gets them by the minute examination of texts. Sastri thus sums up his own methodology : "The best historian is he who holds himself closest to the texts, who interprets them with the utmost justice, who writes and even thinks only in accordance with them."[34]

Sastri's style of writing is refined and pleasant. With adequate command over the language and idioms he avoids verbosity and complex sentences. His polished language and depth of feeling add charm and freshness to his compositions. In the good company of Carlyle, Trevelyan, Dandin and Kalhana he believes that the appeal of history is in the last resort poetic.[35] But everyone can not hope to write like Gibbon, still history, according to Sastri, must be readable if it is to do its work in the world. There is no doubt that Sastri developed a beautiful and sober style of writing which rendered his works pleasant reading.

Nilakanta Sastri sees history as the means of understanding the present to plan for the future. He sees an intimate link between the past, present and future. "What we have been determines in a large measure what we are, and [illegible]

fluence, if not decide, what we shall be".[36] He regards history as the entire record of men living in societies in their geographical and physical environment.[37] Thirdly, he thinks that an absolutely objective history is impossible, for the historian can not cease to be a man ; and here lies the value of different historians dealing with one and the same theme. He partly accepts Benedetto Croce's dictum that all history is contemporary history. As he puts it,

> "it is in a sense true to say that the knowledge of the present is the key to the understanding of the past, that the knowledge of the past varies with the present, and insight into the past with the personality of the historian".[38]

But even for this, it is essential that each historian should accept the ideal of truth and impartiality, and refrain from deliberate suppression and distortion. Fourthly, Sastri holds the view that the historian's task is different from that of the scientist, and perhaps more difficult and complex because his subject matter is man and his actions.[39] Fifthly, he has given a note of caution against certain common errors usually committed by historians in the interpretation of the past. The first is the didactic error—the error of discovering in history the lessons which we wish to inculcate. The second type of error he has termed the patriotic error. It is the error of discovering all great and good things in the past of one's own country. The third is the partisan error. It means taking sides in historical disputes and telling the tale almost exclusively from one particular point of view. The last common error is the incapacity to keep out of error, commonly known as 'Froude's disease' (making statements full of inaccuracies and factual mistakes).[40] Sixthly, Sastri does not think that it is good and useful for the historian 'to have preferences, leading ideas and superior conceptions'. To think thus, in his view, is to mistake very much the nature of history. 'It is not an art ; it is purely a science. It consists, like all science, in facing facts, in analysing them, in putting them together and marking their connections. It may be that a certain philosophy emerges from this scientific history, but it should emerge naturally, of

itself, almost outside the mind of the historian'.[41] With Burke Sastri believes in the uniqueness of historical situations. "No two historical situations are alike. It is often said that history repeats itself. It would be much truer to say that history never repeats itself".[42] The logical conclusion that follows is that there can not be any fixed laws in history.

The age of Nilakanta Sastri (1892-1975) saw the final phase of India's struggle for freedom, transition to independence and the first quarter of independent India. The intense struggle for freedom was followed by a period of jubilation, hope and expectation. Disillusionment soon followed with the result that ugly forces of parochialism, regionalism, chauvinism and separatism raised their heads. Sastri's own homeland, Tamil Nadu, became a centre of regional separatist movement with emphasis on narrow Tamil culture and nationalism. But Sastri, may it be said to his credit, kept clearly aloof from such forces. He always maintained an all-India vision and approached Indian history from the standpoint of an Indian.

Like many historians of his times,[43] Sastri undertook to prove the widespread Indian influence in South-East Asian countries. But if French and Dutch Scholars are to be believed, the claim of widespread Indian influence in the region is exaggerated and not borne out by evidence. It is, they argue, the clear sign of the growing national pride in the role India had played in the Civilization of Asia. According to A.L. Basham, "It reflects the contemporary atmosphere of resurgent nationalism and pan-Asianism".[44] Secondly, while Sastri has been considerably successful in his life's mission of exploring and establishing on strong foundations the history of South India, he has failed to integrate the development in the south with that in the north. Thirdly, he presents an idealised picture of South Indian Society which knew little or no tension or conflict among its various groups, communities or castes. This seems to be an idealization of the state of society, not the actual reality. Lastly, Sastri admits that he is 'mainly a historian with a nodding acquaintance with allied disciplines'. Of the allied disciplines of history he was fairly acquainted with archaeology, epigraphy and numismatics but lacked

knowledge in anthropology, economics, and sociology which now increasingly claim the attention of historians.

When all is said, Nilakanta Sastri still remains the foremost historian of South India and one of the front rankers of modern India. He has contributed more than anybody else towards the reconstruction of South Indian history and culture. He has not only built up the chronology of some of the important dynasties of South India, but has also uncovered the cultural and social history of the people. His aim has always been to discover the rich cultural heritage of the South that lay hidden for a long time. In this self-imposed task he has been eminently successful. Well-equipped in history, archaeology, Sanskrit and languages of the South, he produced a large number of standard volumes on his subject. More than fifty years' devoted study and research (1926-1972),[46] a new approach (maritime side of Indian history for the first time emphasized by him), combined methodology, a keen historical insight and, above all, the vast range of his specialised field, from the age of the Sangam to the Vijayanagar Empire, combine to assure him a high place among the historians of modern India.

II

History is to Radhakamal Mukherjee, as it is to Jacob Burckhardt,[47] the history of civilization, and the history of civilization means to him history of art and culture, philosophy and religion, literature, law and morals, politics, society and economics. Unlike conventional historians who concentrate chiefly on the task of establishing political facts, Radhakamal Mukherjee's interest in art and culture and in all the creations of human spirit gave him a far wider view of history than was possessed by many of his contemporaries. He refused to separate the creative and political activities of man and took history as the embodiment of both. The professor of economics and sociology of the University of Lucknow, Mukherjee turned to the study of Indian civilization with tools and aids not usually possessed by academically trained historians. A connoisseur of art and the Chairman of the Lalit

Kala Academy of Uttar Pradesh, he gave an unconventional treatment to Indian art, culture and civilization, revealing clarity of vision, originality in approach and adequate command over the entire range of India's cultural heritage. Indian culture, in his view, represents a sort of 'pilgrim's progress' from the concrete to the universal, from the finite to the infinite, from the earthly to the heavenly, from the man to the superman and the cosmic absolute. It is this quest for cosmic person, values and universalism that explains, Mukherjee tells us, the peculiar distinctiveness, vitality and continuity of Indian civilization.

Born in 1889 and brought up in a cultured Brahmin family of Berhampur in the Murshidabad district of Bengal,[48] Radhakamal Mukherjee graduated from the Presidency College, Calcutta, with economics and history. After the completion of his post-graduate studies in economics a teaching assignment took him to the University of Lucknow where he was destined to spend the most fruitful period of his life. He started as lecturer and retired as the Vice-Chancellor. Mukherjee appears to have caught the vanishing rays of the Bengal Renaissance and developed a remarkable renaissance versatility. He had easy access to various fields of human knowledge—economics, sociology,[49] anthropology, history, art and culture. His sweep and depth of knowledge, gifted intellect, grasp and mastery over details establish him as one of the foremost cultural historians of India. What renders his writing so interesting and stimulating is his deep love of the Indian past, mature scholarship, refusal to follow any fashionable line of thought and an unshakable faith in the cosmic culture of India. His long and fruitful life came to an end in 1968.

Radhakamal Mukherjee has produced a good number of historical writings on Indian culture. His two-volume *History of Indian Civilization* (1956, 1966) traces the history of Indian culture from the days of the Indus Civilization to the cultural synthesis in the twentieth century. *The Culture and Art of India* (1959) gives the story of the march of Indian culture from the earliest times to the liberal-idealism of the Indo-British renaissance. *The Cosmic Art of India* (1965) and

Flowering of Indian Art (1964) are mainly concerned with the growth and spread of Indian art. *The Universal principles and forms of civilization* (1961)[50] and *The Indian Scheme of Life* (1951) explain the general principles of universalism and the basic tenets of Indian life.[51] *The Changing face of Bengal—A study in riverine economy* (1937) and *The Economic History of India* (1600-1800) give a glimpse into the riverine economy of pre-partition Bengal and a brief survey of two centuries of Indian economy.[52] The latter is virtually an economic history of Mughal India.

A well-read man, Radhakamal Mukherjee delved deep into the original sources of information and used a massive array of diverse material in preparing his volumes on Indian civilization. A life-long student of Indian philosophy, law, religion and morals, he was equally thorough in his study of Indian art, music and painting. As he was essentially an economist and a leading sociologist, he brought his specialised knowledge to bear on his study of culture, He held the view that multi-dimensional approach was the best method of arriving at historical truth. All other approach and methodology appeared to him partial and imperfect. The historian, and particularly the cultural historian, Mukherjee suggests, must take the assistance of allied disciplines like anthropology, archaeology, sociology and economics as he can not afford to ignore any aspect of the life of the people. He must see the whole of it. He made an attempt to translate into practice his somewhat unconventional ideas on historiography. The result is his well-written and scholarly volumes.

Mukherjee's interpretation of Indian culture and art is broad, humanistic, and philosophical. It appears to be free from 'dry naturalism and ego-centricism and stresses the long-range purposiveness and co-operativeness of human development'.[53] Like Burckhardt, he views history as a continuous, living culture. To him civilization is a quest for certain universal, eternal and transcendent values that give meaning to self, cosmos and experience.[54] He interprets religion as the discovery and affirmation of man's deep-felt rapport between himself and cosmos.[55] Art is the vehicle of the abiding values

that civilization creates and nurtures in different countries and epochs.[56] His approach to art and culture is basically historical but this does not prevent him from taking into consideration anthropoiogical, sociological and regional factors and forces that help mould the composite culture of a people.

Mukherjee's analysis of ancient Indian society and scheme of life is bold and original and does not suffer from some of the prevailing notions and attitudes. He asserts that

> "a class-less society must suffer from social entropy, for it is the elite intellectuals, artists and mystics who alone can formulate new values and ideals and give a new impulsion to society".[57]

His interpretation that

> "the four functional groups or varnas in India provided the essential basis of harmony and justice in social organisation".[58]

would appear to many as orthodox and conservative. The Indian art, according to him, has a cosmic tone and temper. Like her philosophy it is perennial and universal. But although cosmic and transcendental, it is never the handmaid of religion and metaphysics.[59] Indian culture too has achieved a golden mean through an age-long reconciliation of mundane and metaphysical interests and goals of life.[60] He has found ten renaissances covering the whole span of Indian history.[61] Four dominant myth and art complexes fashioning culture patterns are Upanishadic, Buddhist, Tantrika and Bhagavata.[62] His interpretation of the Hindu-Muslim cultural fusion reveals his deep understanding of the main streams and cross-currents of cultural heritage. "Both Bhakti and Sufism", he writes, "were catholic, egalitarian movements that broke up the exterior shells of Hinduism and Islam, penetrated into the real, common core of mysticism and welded together the two communities, especially the lowest strata of both".[63] His historical insight discovers the social basis of the rise and growth of Magadhan imperialism :

> "It was the liberalism and humanism of Jainism and Buddhism, whose influence went far beyond the sphere of religion and philosophy, that contributed to the [illegible]

of the Vedic social pattern and flowered in a casteless society and the mighty empire of Mahapadma Nanda of unknown lineage (ajnatakula)".[64]

His pen-portait of the Buddha is captivating,

"An alert, forceful and genial personality with immaculate purity of heart, profound simplicity and austerity of life and deep tenderness and sympathy for the frailties, delusions and sorrows of man, the Buddha is one of the most charming, yet vigorous, figures in history".[65]

Radhakamal Mukherjee had a powerful pen which he wielded with facility and grace. He wrote in a flourishing, vigorous style. He discovered a close relationship between Indian civilization and her art and expressed it in forceful language :

"Through the ages Indian Civilization has discovered new philosophies and myths and art has embodied them in appropriate figures and patterns of symbolism, in significant forms and expressive flowing lines and sinuous curves. Art has voiced the truths and values of India's endless metaphysical quest".[66]

Sometimes he wrote long, complex sentences but these were never unwieldy and vague. The following may be cited as an illustration,

"Unity of Indian Civilization was derived from the fundamental plan of Vedic philosophy, religion and myth that set forth the metaphysical ideal of the Universal Man and Universal Community as facets of the progressive movement of the human spirit".[67]

Mukherjee did not follow fashionable ideas, isms or schools of thought in his study of Indian art and culture. He had clear ideas about the methodology of history. A believer in sociological and multi-dimensional approach, he is free from any bias in favour of or against any event or personality. The method he advocates is obviously the gestalt approach to history. It looks upon

"history as a cumulative, moving, forward looking whole, with the attention focussed on the dynamism of myths, traditions and values into which the whole can be resolved or split up and which makes possible the right understand-

ing and interpretation of human affairs, of things said and done in the past".[68]

A student of civilization has to study it in a comprehensive manner. The obsession with politics or with the role of the state is an obstacle to the use of an integrative, sociological method in history. It seeks, by a multi-cultural approach, to interpret broad movements in terms of myths, religions, ethos and art patterns. Mukherjee insists that only such a method can bring order and continuity into Indian evolution.[69] Modern social sciences with too much emphasis on 'scientific objectivity' seek a physicalist interpretation of all arts, functions and experiences of human living. Its offshoot, cultural relativism, appears to him inadequate and insufficient. He advocates a combination of the scientific-empirical and philosophical—normative methods and principles which rejects the present dichotomy between the sciences and humanities and between naturalism and idealism and helps a proper understanding of the triad, person-values—and cosmos i.e., civilization.[70] The historical method must integrate the techniques and methods of geography, psychology, anthropology, economics and sociology for understanding and interpreting social relations, traditions and events of the past.[71]

Radhakamal Mukherjee takes a broad, humanistic—idealistic view of history. To him true history is the universal history, the total march of mankind. "History has become in some measure sectionalised, devoted to the rise and fall of separate peoples and cultures, whereas true history reveals a world movement, a broad march of mankind that rests on the pooling of common values and achievements".[72] The proper subject matter of all histories is, therefore, 'supranational, universal humanity with its concepts and trends conceived only in reference to the common vicissitudes of humanity and in subordination to its total march'. Next, history, like human personality, is multi-dimentional, an integration of the trends of politics and war, technology and economic development, art, education and religion. It is a false interpretation of history, Mukherjee tells us, which deals separately with different fields of human activity and values, such as political, econo-

mic, religious or social."[73] With Riehl, Burckhardt and Buckle he holds the view that the cultural forms like music, painting, art and architecture give an illustrated history of the land and the people.

To tell the truth, Mukherjee has no patience with the materialistic conception of history. He calls it 'the Marxist school of economic determinism' which is directly derived from the Hegelian dialectic of the idea in hlstory.[74] Further, unlike Ranke, Treitschke, Marx, Burckhardt, Seeley and Acton, he does not subscribe to 'the power concept in human history'.[75] About Indian history he holds definite and distinct views of his own,

> "India's history is not like a chariot driven along the narrow and ruggcd paths of aggression and violence by the twin powers of economics and politics. It is rather the larger car of Jagannatha progressing along the broad highway of humanity toward a cosmic destiny, a synthesis of man's myths, values and aspirations".[76]

Next, Mukherjee believes in the practical utility and usefulness of the study of history. From a study of the successes and failures of the past one can take lessons and guidance as to the present and future.[77] Finally, what is most striking in his view of Indian history is that it is not "the handmaid of heroes and representative men, but an ageless process in which not mcn but the human species, not particular lives but Life cyclically grow, mature and decay".[78] If representative men and heroes have at all any iufluence they are not political heroes but men of ideas like the Buddha, Mahabir, Kabir, Ramanand, Nanak and Chaitanya. They are more important and lasting in their influences than the political heroes.[79]

The golden heritage complex seems to have influenced Radhakamal Mukherjee's writings on Indian civilization. The growing consciousness in the country of India's glorious past and of her part in the civilization of Asia and of the world possibly cast its spell on his mind. The study of Indian cultural history would have been better served had he been a little more objective in approach. In his view Indian colonisation in South-East Asia is a unique episode in world history :

> "For the first time in the history of the world, colonisation was identified with neither exploitation nor violence but with the uplift of backward races to a higher level of culture, religion and morals".[80]

Perhaps many will not accept this interpretation, others will find in it an improved version of 'white man's burden'. Further it is not difficult to occasionally detect in his writings an undertone of Hindu nationalism. The Hindu elements in Indian art and culture have been emphasized at the cost of Islamic, Western, and non-Hindu constituents. Moreover, Mukherjee sometimes makes sweeping comments and generalisations. He writes that "Indian art has written in Chisel and brush the whole history of Indian Civilization".[81] There is no doubt that the Indian art is the most representative of Indian culture but still it would be too much to claim that it gives the entire civilization.

With all these limitations Radhakamal Mukherjee, however, occupies a prominent place among the cultural historians of India. He had many qualities of a cultural historian—a sharp intellect, multi-dimensional approach, a broad outlook and a close familiarity with different facets of Indian past. His synthetic qualities, liberal and humanistic frame of mind, concern for spirit and idea, not matter, endow his writings with a distinct stamp of his own. What is strikingly lacking in him is judicial temper, detachment and belanced writing. Concerned with ideas-in-action Radhakamal Mukherjee represents a distinct trend in Indian historical writing. He is diametrically opposite to what Damodar Dharmanand Kosambi stands for in Indian historiograghy.

III

Damodar Dharmanand Kosambi is not an historian in the conventional sense of the term. For him, as for his co-thinkers, "history is the presentation in chronological order of successive changes in the means and relations of production". Every serious history must clearly reveal 'the con[illegible]

development, the inner causes which ultimately manifest themselves in the striking events and the driving forces which underlie great movements'.[83] All other histories Kosambi calls 'formal history',[84] a means of escape, a romantic pastime, not a scientific pursuit. Culture he defines 'as the essential ways of life of the whole people',[85] not a matter of intellectual and spiritual values. Personally the historian is "a unqiue example of combination of science, classical learning and scholarship. In his approach and outlook he represented a synthesis of the spirit of science and humanism".[86] Possessed of a rare renaissance versatility, Kosambi had 'an encyclopaedic mind with a flair for original research'. He was more than adequately equipped for the study of history. Apart from his mother tongue and English, he knew French, Greek, Latin. Sanskrit, Pali and Arabic.[87] Besides his formal academic training in history, he had deep and abiding interest in allied disciplines like numismatics, ethnology, archaeology, philology and pre-history. Though mathematics was his first love, Kosambi was always after new and interesting fields of study. He focussed his searching light on such widely diverse fields as Biology and Sanskrit poetical works. He had a literary bent of mind and was a great lover of literature in all languages.

Born at Kosben in Goa in 1907, Kosambi was brought up in a family known for its learning and culture. His father Dharmanand Kosambi was a renowned scholar of Buddhist studies. Damodar inherited from his father a spirit of enquiry, deep love for his country and the people and a sharp intellect. From his father he also got his first lessons in the study of Indian history.[88] His father's teaching assignment at Harvard (U.S.A.) took him there and he graduated with distinction from this University with Mathematics, History and Languages. He served both Benares and Aligarh as teacher of Mathematics for very short terms before settling down at Fergusson Coliege, Poona, (1929-1946).[89] From 1947 to 1962 he was with the Tata Institute of Funtlamental Research as Professor of Mathematics. In 1965 he was made the Scientist Emeritus by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.[90] A talented career full of promise came to an abrupt end in 1966.

Kosambi has to his credit four historical works and nearly sixty stray historical articles[91] contributed to renowned journals at home and abroad. All these have produced a deep impact on the study of Indian history. Two major works are *An Introduction to the study of Indian History* (1956) and *The Culture and Civilisation in Ancient India in Historical Outline* (1965) and two minor studies being *Exasperating Essays : Exercises in the Dialectical Method* (1957) and *Myth and Reality : Studies in the formation of Indian Culture* (1962). *An Introduction to the study of Indian History* is not a connected and comprehensive historical account of India in the conventional sense of the term.[92] The author has traversed, within the broad historical framework, the vast sweep of Indian history, tracing only the dominant trends and important landmarks in the tools of production and productive relations, socio-economic development and cultural life of the people from the pre-historic times to the British conquest of India. The approach called by the author as modern[93] is no doubt new and unconventional in Indian historiography. In only ten chapters (Scope and methods, The heritage of pre-class society, civilisation and Barbarism in the Indus valley, The Aryans in the land of the Seven rivers, The Aryan Expansion, The rise of Magadha, The formation of a village economy, Interlude of Trade and Invasions, Feudalism from above, and Feudalism from below) he has delineated a wide framework the details of which are yet to be collected according to the author's own methodology. *The Culture and Civilisation of Ancient India in Historical* outline is a very brief outline of ancient Indian history and culture from pre-historic times to the advent of the Muhammedans about 1200 A.D. The aim of the author has been not so much to provide formal historical information as to analyse the modes of production, productive relations and the resultant social, religious and political institutions of ancient India. In the historical perspective he deals with Primitive Life and Prehistory, the First cities (Indus culture), The Aryans, Transition from Tribe to Society, State and Religion in Greater Magadha preparing the way towards Feudalism. His ideas and theories as outlined in the book are certainly novel and thought-provoking.

Exasperating Essays : *Exercises in the Dialectical Method* is a collection of ten essays of which only three are strictly historical[94] and related to Indian history. The rest are on such diverse topics as the function of leadership in a mass movement, science and freedom, the Kanpur Road, Imperialism and peace etc. *Myth and Reality* : *Studies in the formation of Indian Culture* contains five articles on some surviving Indian myths. His aim has been mainly to trace 'the primitive roots of some Indian myths and ritual that survived the beginning of civilization and indeed survive to this day'. These are, according to Kosambi, the essential part of Indian Culture.[95] Of his nearly sixty articles eight are devoted to numismatic studies, ten to pre-history, eight to approach and methodology, and the rest to different aspects of ancient Indian history and culture.

For the ancient history of India, Kosambi postulates, there is no historical record worth the name. There is only vague popular tradition, with 'very little documentation above the level of myth and legend'. Sources are extremely meagre and their interpretation is even more puzzling.[96] It is not possible even to construct anything like a complete list of kings. This he attributes to 'Brahmin indifference to past and present reality'. So Kosambi believes that direct procedure would be futile so far as the ancient history of India is concerned. Archaeological and literary sources help build up ancient history of a country. But Indian archaeology is not advanced enough 'to solve the really important questions, nor even to ask some of them'. He is also doubtful about the usefulness of philology as an alternative source of history for the undocumented period. The results of anthropometrical research do not appear very convincing to him. What appears most objectionable in their procedure is that 'it takes no notice of changed physical measurements due to superior methods of food production.[97]

Lack of conventional sources of information renders, according to Kosambi, the historian's task difficult but not hopeless. Materialistic in approach and thinking, he considers plough and agricultural tools of a people more important than the name of their king. Kosambi tackles problems of chronology by demarcating historical periods according to the means and

relations of production, not by changes of dynasty or battles. He recognises that major wars, great changes in rulers, significant religious upheavals signalise fundamental changes in the productive relations of the people. In undeveloped society 'true social forces guiding or forcing historical development manifest themselves through wars or reformation in religion'.[98] Only the successive developments, in chronological order, in the means and relations of production constitute the history of a people. This history, Kosambi observes, can be written with the help of tribal remnants, written records, archaeology, inscriptions, coins, epigraphs and ethnographic data.'[99]

So far as the literary sources of ancient Indian history are concerned, the Vedas, the two epics Mahabharata and Ramayana, and the Puranas contain mostly legends, myths, fables or sermons. If critically edited and carefully handled they may yield "minute historical grains from a vast amount of mythical chaff".[100] The Buddhist canonical literature in Pali language, Kosambi thinks, gives 'verifiable history', for archaeology supports the record. The Jain Sutras in their present form are later and less important. Kosambi takes special care in the interpretation of sources. Apart from critical treatment of documents and literary sources he collates written records with archaeology. He aiso interprets each of these 'in conjunction with ethnographic data'.[101]

"No attempt at history", Kosambi suggests "can be regarded as mature which does not, within the framework of the author's ideology, make some attempt at analysis".[102] Kosambi's analysis of ancient Indian history and culture, though bold and exciting, may not be acceptable to all. He holds the view that the importance of Chattel slavery in the relations of production and as a supply of labour for production was negligible.[103] It may be true of the early Vedic period, but for the entire period of Indian history it appears to be a sweeping generalisation. Next, he has summarily rejected the golden age idea of ancient Indian history proudly projected by the nineteenth century scholars. "There was no original golden age of mankind", writes Kosambi, "outside the imagination of poets and priests. The golden age, if any, lies in the future,

in the past".[104] The central fact of ancient Indian history, according to him, is 'the continuous process of assimilation of tribal elements into general society'.[105] The process of acculturation in India was mutual. Not only the immigrants influenced the aboriginals, they also took over some indigenous and even aboriginal beliefs and customs.[106] Again, historical development in all parts of India is not similar and even. "In fact, the Punjab had gone through a cycle of urban civilization and decay, the Gangetic basin saw theological controversies and the rise of great empires, when the most primitive societies were the rule in the Indian peninsula."[107] He saw the doctrine of bhakti which is the essence of *the Gita* as the ideological basis of feudalism which rests on a chain of personal loyalty.[108] At the background of the growth of feudalism and the break-up of the all-India empire lay the fact that the growth of the virtually self-contained village at the end of the Gupta period meant considerable decrease of commodity production. A great empire and a standing army could be maintained only if there were great commodity production with extensive trade and sufficient cash taxes.[109]

With very good command over the language and idioms Kosambi writes in an elegant, effcctive style. His sentences are well-knit and simple. With well-chosen words he conveys his ideas in a lucid manner, free from ambiguity and confusion. His power of exposition will impress his reader even if he does not agree with his views. The following is an example of Kosambi's smooth but vigorous language :

> "When the Buddha passed away by an obscure village, attended only by one disciple, his own Sakyan tribe had been massacred, both his great royal patrons dead in miserable circumstances ; his brilliant pupils Sāriputta and Moggallana had already attained Nirvana. The doctrine continued to grow nevertheless because it was eminently fitted to the needs of a rapidly evolving society".[110]

The next sentence will illustrate his power of exposition :

> "Buddhism had never become a state religion in the sense of Islam or christianity, nor did it use the state machinery for the suppression of any rival doctrine".[111]

Kosambi is at the same time a consummate narrative artist.

> "At its best, Sanskrit literature is exquisite, with an intricate pattern of beauty. Even at its best, it does not give the depth, simplicity of expression, the grandeur of spirit, the real greatness of humanity that one finds in Pali Dhammapada, the Divina Commedia, or Pilgrim's Progress. It is the literature of and for a class, not a people".[112]

A Marxist historian of the unorthodox type, Kosambi believes that Indian history does not fit precisely into a rigid framework or the Marxist model of primitive communism, (the patriarchal mode or the Asiatic mode), the slave society of classical Greece or Rome, feudalism, the bourgeois mode and socialism.[113] The adoption of Marx's thesis, he asserts, does not mean blind repetition of all his conclusions at all times.[114] Kosambi does not seem to accept some of Marx's observations about India and Indian history. These are the concept of Asiatic mode of production,[115] the unchangeableness of Asiatic societies, and the statement 'Indian society has no history at all, at least no known history'.[116] Accepting Marx's basic postulates he improves upon them in his own way. In Indian villages, according to Kosambi, because of lack of metals and salt, there was some commodity production to be exchanged with these essential commodities. As regards unchangeableness of Asiatic Societies, he is of the view that mere use of plough in the agrarian village economy is itself a great change in the means of production. Moreover, change in the number of village units meant change of quality. Lastly, the greatest periods of Indian history (the Maurya, Satavahana, Gupta) owed nothing to intruders. 'They mark precisely the formation and the spread of the basic village society, or the development of new trade centres.'[117] For all that Kosambi, however, remains a Marxist.[118] To him it is the correct method of arriving at historical truth. All other methods, according to him, are not scientific and hence worth pursuing.[119]

Kosambi's methodology has been suitably defined by the author himself. It is called "combined Methods in Indology".[120] As the name indicates it is definitely interdisciplinary in approach and method. Though he believes in the Marxist

method of interpreting and changing history, he is above all an original thinker with passionate devotion to scientific research. For ancient Indian history and culture he advocates combined operations of allied disciplines like philology, archaeology, anthropology, sociology and history. None of the various techniques mentioned can, by itself, lead to any valid conclusions about ancient India. Only their joint operations can produce desired results. Another aspect of his methodology is that Kosambi attaches much importance to a great deal of honest and competent fieldwork. Documentary, numismatic, epigraphic and other kinds of sources are to be augmented and strengthened by fieldwork. This is specially necessary because contemporary Indian society is composed of elements that preserve the indelible marks of almost every historical stage. This will clear up, Kosambi tells us, many controversial points and explain the origins of Indian myths and legends.[121]

Kosambi's philosophy of history is beyond doubt dialectical materialism. Obviously his idea of progress is clearly different from that held by his contemporary Indian historians. To them progress was primarily that of ideas, of institutions, political, religious, social and economic. To Kosambi it is a progress in the means and relations of production, and all other progress derives from it. As he puts it,

> "Man did not progress uniformly or steadily; but he did progress on the whole, from a fairly inefficient animal to a tool-making and tool-using creature who dominated the whole planet by his numbers and by the varied forms of his activity."[122]

But as 'no materialist can afford to neglect the effect of ideas upon social development' he did not minimise its importance. Secondly, like many of his contemporaries Kosambi holds the view that the study of the past can provide a correct thinking towards a solution of the present problems and act as a guide to future action.[123] Evidently he derives his idea of the past from the Marxist theory of dialectical materialism. Thirdly, Kosambi believes that every historian has some theory, tacit or explicit, upon which his work is based.[124] Frankly he has no patience with conventional history which merely presents great

events in a chronological sequence. This type of history is clearly insufficient because "the relative importance of events rarely appears the same to the people of another time, place, civilization, class bias..."[125] Lastly, history to him is not a means of escape, a romantic pastime, a profession; it is a scientific pursuit with a definite purpose. The implication of his critical approach to history is that since all events of the past can be critically analysed, the current events too, and men can make their own history consciously.[126] They need not suffer it to be made for them by others, or merely study it after the event.

The late forties and early fifties of this century witnessed the triumph of communism in several countries of the World. A communist regime came to be established in neighbouring China. The Indian intellectuals professing faith in communism felt encouraged and saw socialism as the only solution to India's manifold problems. The newborn Indian Republic was then grappling with the gigantic problems created in the wake of the partition of the subcontinent. Kosambi saw this unprecedented human suffering. The prevailing condition of the society is truly reflected in his writing :

> "the famished apathy of the villager, senseless opportunism and termite greed of the 'cultured' strata, sullen un-cororordinated discontent among the workers, the general demoralisation, misery, squalor, and degrading superstition".[127]

Against this historical background Kosambi took to the study of ancient Indian history and culture and it is natural that the prevailing mood of depression and gloom cast its shadow on his historical research. As his philosophy of history provides not only for the critical analysis of past events but also for conscious making of present history he wanted the Indian people to make their own history[128] in the light of the past.

Kosambi's historical writings, though bold and original are not free from certain shortcomings. His too much emphasis on totemic origins of names and gotras has been criticised. His guesses and generalisations constitute an element of weakness rather than strength in his works. His assertion that the Great Bath at Mohenjodaro was a prototype of the later

sacred pond (Puskara) or his contention that internal economic distribution was administered by the Great Temple (the Indian counterpart of the Mesopotamian Ziggurat) and its priesthood can not be taken for granted in the absence of positive evidence.[129] Many will object to his statement that "a language cannot impose itself upon a large number of people who had a different speech, unless accompanied by a superior form of production"[130] or "social organisation can not be more advanced than the instruments of production will allow...". Instances may be easily multiplied. All these stem from his fundamental approach to historical studies. As a Marxist he makes positive, categorical statement which sometimes seems to be far-fetched in view of the inadequate or incomplete nature of source materials. Many of his hypotheses would remain unacceptable unless and until these are corroborated by new archaeological finds and new documentary evidence. His hypothesis that Buddhism declined because with its vast unproductive monastic system it "had become a drain upon the economy instead of a stimulus"[131] does not appear to be plausible. The rich South Indian temples disprove Kosambi's hypothesis. Again, his hypothesis that the ruin of the Indus cities could have been due to the wiping out of their system of agriculture[132] also remains to be proved by further archaeological excavations.

Despite all these limitations Kosambi remains a daring trend-setter in Indian historiography. His penetrating analysis and exciting hypotheses, bold interpretation and rational approach inspired a whole generation of Marxist scholars.[133] His use of dialectical materialism as a tool of historical analysis opened up a new vista with immense possibilities. Imbued with his ideas a new band of Scholars is now carrying forward the torch lit up by the master, adding a new dimension to Indian historical scholarship.

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2. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *Presidential Address*, Indian History Congress, Patna Session, 1946.
3. Sastri, Sources of Indian History, pp. 1, 11-12; and *Presidential Address*, Patna, 1946.
4. K. A. N. Sastri, *Preface to Development of Religion in South India.*
5. Jointly with G. Srinivasachari. Their another joint work was *Advanced History of India.* His text books suffer in quality because of collaboration and insufficient personal attention.
6. Jointly with N. Venkataramanayya.
7. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Pandyan Kingdom, Preface iii.*
8. One volume edition, 1955. This study made Sastri fairly known in the scholarly world because of its detailed study of village administration.
9. K. A. N. Sastri, *History of Srivijaya*, p. 1.
10. Sastri, *South Indian Influences in the Far East*, p. 1.
11. Ibid., pp. 135-36.
12. A. Sharma, *All India Oriental Conference*, 1957.
13. Sastri ed., *A Comprehensive History of India*, Vol. II, jointly sponsored by the Indian History Congress and the Bharatiya Itihas Parishad. Introduction. See also Note on the volume by S. N. Sen.
14. For example, Problem of the origin of the Dravidians, Question of Aryanisation of South India etc. Secondly, paucity of materials for the early part of South Indian history, earlier sources relate more to cultural and social history than to political history, etc.
15. Sastri, *Lectures on factors in Indian History*, p. 2.
16. Sastri, *Historical Method in relation to problems of South Indian History*, p. 14.
17. Sastri, *Historical Method*, p. 6.
18. Sastri. *History and Culture of the Tamils*, p. 5.
19. Sastri, *Cultural Contacts between Aryans and Dravidians*, p. 64. and *The Pandyan Kingdom*, p. 2.
20. Sastri, *South Indian Influences in the Far East*, p. 122.
21. Sastri, *The Colas*, Vol. II, p. 350.
22. Sastri, *The Pandyan Kingdom*, p. 2.
23. Sastri, *Cultural Expansion of India*, p. 68.
24. Sastri, *A History of South India*, p. 284.
25. Sastri, *Presidential Address*, Patna, 1946.
26. Sastri, *Historical Method* p. 8.
27. Sastri, *A History of South India*, pp. 1-2.
28. Sastri, *The Culture and History of the Tamils*, Preface.
29. Sastri, *Lectures on factors in Indian History*, p. 1.

30. Nilakanta Sastri, coming as he did from an orthodox Brahmin-family, could not rise above his class prejudice and caste bias. The rigid hierarchical society and the oppressive social customs of the South failed to interest him. It is, of course, difficult for an historian to cut himself off from his social moorings. This is one of the perennial problems of objective historical studies.

31. Sastri, *Historical Method*, p. 6.

32. Ibid., p. 2.

33. Ibid., p. 14.

34. Sastri, *Historical Method*, p. 14.

35. Sastri, *Presidential Address*, I.H.C. Patna, 1946.

36. Sastrl, *Presidential Address*.

37. Ibid.

38. Sastri, *Historical Method*, p. 6.

39. Sastri, *Presidential Address*.

40. Sastri, *Historical Method*, p. 13.

41. Ibid., p. 14. In his view history is a science but it is far more complex than physical science. It gives you a certain knowledge of reality, but it is not a knowledge of universal application, like scientific knowledge. Historical knowledge is unique in its character and quality.

42. Ibid., p. 7.

43. Radhakumud Mukherjee, R. C. Majumdar and others wrote on the subject.

44. A. L. Basham, op. cit., p. 226.

45. Sastri, *Cultural Contacts between Aryans and Dravidians*, p. 5.

46. In 1926 he delivered his lectures on *The Pandyan Kingdom* and in 1972 he relinquished charge as the Director of the Institute of Traditional Cultures in Tamil Nadu.

47. Jacob Burckhardt, *Judgements on History and Historians*. Introduction by Trevor Roper, p. 11.

48. His father Gopal Chandra Mukherjee was a scholar of some repute. He was appointed Tagore Law Professor of the University of Calcutta. His elder brother was Radhakumud Mukherjee, a well-known historian.

49. He is one of the pioneers in Indian Sociological Studies.

50. An *Address* delivered at the East-west Cultural Conference held at the R.K. Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, November 1961.

51. Two other works of the author *The Destiny of Civilization* (1964) and *The Sickness of Civilization* (1964) reveal his apprehension and concern for the fate of civilization in the age of growing tension and conflict between nations.

52. The first is the Calcutta University Readership lectures, 1938 and the second is based on a series of lectures the another delivered to the I.C.S. probationers. It is undated.

53. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Sickness of Civilization*, p. 51.
54. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Destiny of Civilization*, p. 40.
55. Ibid., p. 158.
56. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Social function of Art*, Preface.
57. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Indian Scheme of Life*, Introduction. This reminds one of what Toynbee calls creative minority.
58. Ibid , pp. 12-13.
59. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Cosmic Art of India*, p. 2, and *The Culture and Art of India*, Preface 9.
60. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Cosmic Art of India*, Introduction p. 19.
61. These are, (i) the intellectual and religious renaissance from sixth century to third century B.C., (ii) the renaissance of Bhagavatism and Mahayana Buddhism from first century A.D. to one thousand A.D., (iii) neo-Brahmanical renaissance of art, literature and culture under the Guptas, (iv) the Tantrika renaissance that followed the Gupta period, (v) later Buddhist Tantrika renaissance under the Pala and Sena empires from the 8th to 11th century A.D. (vi) the Pallava, the Chalukya and the Chola renaissances in South India, (vii) the renaissance of literature and fine arts under the empire of Vijayanagar, (viii) the religious renaissance and the social movements that began with Ramananda and spread from Maharashtra to Kamrupa (14th to 18th century A.D.), (ix) the renaissance in literature, painting, arehitecture and handicraft under the Mughal emperors, (x) the nineteenth century Bengal renaissance under the leadership of Rammohun Roy. *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. I, pp. 18-21.
62. Ibid., pp. 42-44.
63. Ibid., p. 51.
64. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. II, p. 90.
65. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. I, p. 172.
66. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Cosmic Art of India*, p. 45.
67. R. K Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. I, p. 12.
68. Ibid., p. 3. Gestalt comes from the German word meaning whole and its basic premise is that an integrated whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
69. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Culture and Art of India*, p. 34.
70. R. K. Mukherjee, *Universal principles and forms of Civilization*, pp. 1-3.
71. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. I, pp. 4-5.
72. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Culture and Art of India*, p. 34.
73. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. II, p. 442.
74. R. K. Mukherjee, *The Culture and Art of India*, p. 35.
75. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. II, p. 442.
76. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. I, Preface v.
77. Ibid., Preface ix, pp. 5, 195, Vol. II, p. 330.

78. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. I, p. 10.
The statement strikes a familiar note—Spengler's cyclical and organic view of history.

79. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization* Vol. II, pp. 186-209.

80. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. I, p. 407.

81. R. K. Mukherjee, *A History of Indian Civilization*, Vol. I, p. 49.

82. D. D. Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilization in Ancient India*, p. 10.

83. Kosambi, *The study of Ancient Indian Tradition in Indian Historical Research Institute Silver Jubilee Commemoration volume*, Bombay, 1953, p. 196.

84. Kosambi, *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*, p. 177.

85. Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilization*, p. 10.

86. V. V. Giri, Foreword, *Science and Human Progress* : D. D. Kosambi Commemoration volume.

87. Maj. Gen. Habibullah, *Science and Human Progress*, p. 329.

88. Kosambi, *An Introduction*, p. 174.

89. Kosambi had a special fascination for Fergusson College as his father was associated with this institution for a long time.

90. For a biographical sketch two commemoration volumes, *Science and Human Progress and Indian Society* : *Historical Probings*, may be consulted.

91. D. N. Jha has given the number of Kosambi's historical articles as nearly one hundred? (S. P. Sen ed., op. cit., p. 121) and R. S. Sharma has given the exact figure of sixty. (Indian Society etc. Preface). Both seem to be incorrect. However, Sharma is nearer the truth. Some of Kosambi's articles stand on the borderline of history and allied sciences. So it is difficult to state exactly the number of his historical articles.

92. Kosambi, *An Introduction*, Preface & p. 13.

93. Ibid., Preface vii.

94. (i) The Bourgeoisie comes of age in India, (ii) On the class structure of India, (iii) The decline of Buddhism in India.

95. Kosambi, *Myth and Reality*, p. 2.

96. Kosambi, *Exasperating Essays*, p. 11 & *The Culture and Civilization*, pp. 9-10.

97. Kosambi, *An Introduction*, pp. 105-106.

98. *On a Marxist approach to Indian History*. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute Journal xxxi, Poona, 1951.

99. Kosambi, *An Introduction*, p. 4 & *What Constitutes Indian history?* BORI xxxv, Poona, 1955, p. 199.

100. Kosambi, *An Introduction*, pp. 108-110.

101. Kosambi, *An Introduction*, p. 7.

102. Kosambi, *Exasperating Essays*, p. 12.

103. *The Culture and Civilization*, p. 23.

104. Ibid., pp. 27-28. This idea is in perfect conformity with his

ideology. Marxists do not accept the idea of 'a golden age' in the past as it contradicts their main thesis.

105. *An Introduction*, p. 25.

106. *The Culture and Civilization*, p. 34.

107. *An Introduction*, p. 20.

108. *Myth and Reality*, p. 31.

109. *An Introduction*, pp. 281-282.

110. *The Culture and Civilization*, p. 114.

111. Ibid., p. 179.

112. *An Introduction*, p. 265.

113. *The Culture and Civilization*, p. 23.

114. *An Introduction*, p. 10.

115. Asiatic mode of production, according to Marx, is characterised by tribal communal ownership of land and a self-sustaining economy based on a combination of agriculture and manufacture within a small community.

116. What we call its history is but the history of successive intruders who founded their empires on the passive basis of the unresisting and unchanging (village) society. *An Introduction*, p. 11.

117. Ibid., p. 11.

118. Some people talk of Kosambi's Marxist bias. It was not his bias, it was his whole philosophy that provided him with the basic model, tools of analysis and view of history.

119. *The Culture and Civtlizatian*, p. 23.

120. Reprinted in *Science and Human Progress*, p. 1. Originally published in *Indo-Iranian Jonrnal*, vi, 1963.

121. *Myth and Reality*, p. 2.

122. *The Culture and Civilization*, p. 28.

123. *An Introduction*, Preface ix & x, p. 3.

124. Ibid., p. 12.

125. *The Study of Ancient Indian Tradition*, op. cit., p. 196. History, according to Kosambi, reflects man's progress at satisfying his needs in co-operation with all his fellowmen. An Introduction, Preface viii.

126. *The Study of Ancient Indian Tradition*, op. cit., p. 196.

127. *An Introduction*, Preface vii.

128. *An Introduction*, Preface ix & x.

129. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, lxxvii, p. 220 & *The Culture and Civilization*, p. 69.

130. *The Culture and Civilization*, pp. 63 & 76.

131. D. D. Kosambi, *The Culture and Civilization*, p. 185.

132. Ibid., p. 71.

133. K. M. Ashraf, Muhammad Habib, R. S. Sharma, Irfan Habib, Hussaini, Bipanchandra, Romila Thapar and many others are inspired by Kosambi.

Chapter Six

RATIONAL SCHOOL OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL HISTORIANS

I

Satish Chandra Mitra, the historian of Jessore-Khulna, may be regarded as one of the pioneers in the study of micro-history when that genre of historical studies was not considered attractive enough for most scholars in the field.[1] Two worthy sons of Bengal, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the novelist-thinker-patriot and Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray, the well-known chemist and philanthropist, inspired him with the idea of writing the history of the country. Satish Candra found his life's mission in studying and writing the history of Jessore-Khulna.[2] Bankim Chandra who exhorted his countrymen in the *Bangadarshan*[3] to investigate and write the history of the country, left a deep impact on young Satish Chandra whose father Peary Mohan Mitra served as a subordinate official under him when he was posted at Khulna (1861) as the deputy magistrate. Prafulla Chandra Ray, an illustrious son of the district, not only inspired the historian but also ungrudgingly undertook to bear the entire financial responsibility for the project.[4] On the intellectual plane he was fortunate to receive help and advice from some contemporary worthies like Jadunath Sarkar, Vincent Smith, Henry Beveridge and J. D. Anderson. Three factors combined to take him to historical studies—love of humanity, patriotism and the impact of Bankim Chandra and Prafulla Chandra Ray.[5]

Born at Paikpara in the Khulna district of Bengal in 1872, Satish Chandra spent his early years at Mollahat (Khulna), his father's place of posting. A few years later his father resigned the government service and a period of trial began for young Satish Chandra. He had to prosecute his studies against heavy odds.[6] From 1892 to 1898 his ordeal was the severest. Having graduated from the City College of Calcutta in 1897,

he tried for M.A. in English language and literature the very next year but could not succeed. That was the end of his formal education. From 1899 to 1904 he served as Headmaster of several schools and earned the nickname of 'Headmaster' for his popularity and success in the profession. Henry Beveridge mentioned him as Headmaster. Appointed teacher of History, Mathematics and Bengali language and literature in the Hindu Academy of Daulatpur[7] (Khulna) in 1904, Satish Chandra tried heart and soul for the over-all development of the institution. Apart from his teaching assignment, he was the librarian of Hindu Academy, keeping charge at the same time of a small museum which he himself had built up with the historical and archaeological finds of the districts of Jessore and Khulna. Though history was his first love, he was a passionately devoted student of literature and himself was a writer and a poet.[8]

Satish Chandra chose the history of two districts because upto 1881 Jessore and Khulna formed a single district (only in 1882 Khulna was made a separate district). In history and culture and even in physical and geographical conditions they were inseparable. In custom, manners, social pattern and behaviour these two districts presented almost the same and identical picture. Satish Chandra originally planned to write the history of Jessore-Khulna in three volumes. But later the idea of writing a third volume was abandoned owing to declining health and financial stringency. The first volume contains an elaborate account of geographical and physical condition of the districts. It gives a historical account of the districts from the earliest times to the end of Pathan rule in Bengal. The first twelve chapters of the volume deal with the river systems, soil, climate, people, flora and fauna, local dialect, etc. The remainiug twenty eight chapters deal with political history. The second volume takes the historical narrative from the Mughal rule down to the beginning of the present century. The principal figures are Pratapaditya and Sitaram whose heroic exploits form the central theme of the volume. Indigo rebellion, land settlement, local trade, social condition, art and literature are important topics in the British period. The planning of

work is, however, far from satisfactory. While the first volume gives an outline history of the districts from the earliest times to the end of Pathan rule, the second volume is mainly devoted to the history of two Bhuiyas, Pratapaditya and Sitaram and only twelve chapters out of fifty-nine deal with the British rule. Apart from his magnum opus, *History of Jessore-Khulna* (in two volumes 1914, 1922; written in Bengali), Satish Chandra wrote a popular biography of *Pratap Singha* (1904) the famous Rajput hero, and fifteen stray articles[9] on different aspects of Bengal and Indian history.

For about seventeen years Satish Chandra got himself engaged in the task of collecting materials for his history.[10] His attitude to the sources is somewhat peculiar and unconventional. Not only did he make a minute and critical study of literary sources but also personally inspected almost all the historical sites in the districts and collected information from the local people. In doing this he had to go to inaccessible regions of Jessore-Khulna without caring for dangers and risks involved in the venture.[11] The result is the collection of a vast mass of materials for use in his history. He collated his collected materials with the written documents, processed them and then came to his own conclusions. Satish Candra seems to have consulted a fairly good amount of original sources on the subject. In his history one finds a wide range of original sources used from *Latif's Travels* to Mirza Nathan's *Baharistan-i-Ghaybi*, family chronicles and genealogies to monuments, inscriptions and coins, accepted authorities like *Akbarnama*, *Riyaz-us-Salatin*, *Tarikh-i-Bangala* and Du Jarric's *Histoire* to rational use of myths, traditions and legends.

Endowed with the insight of an historian Satish Candra saw a fundamental difference between the Pathan and Mughal rule in Bengal. The Pathans made Bengal their homeland, spent here the money raised from the people as taxes, whereas the Mughals used the money from Bengal to beautify Delhi and Agra.[12] His hypothesis that the city of Ganga, the royal residence of the Gangaridai mentioned by Ptolemy and the author of the Periplus is likely to have been located at Deganga (near Berachampa in 24 Parganas) has been accepted by scholars

after recent archaeological excavations at Chandraketugarh (Berachampa) and its neighbourhood.[13] But in the treatment of his heroes Satish Chandra could not display the same insight and balanced judgment. He seems to have drawn an idolized picture of Pratapaditya and his achievements : "He (Pratap) began his career as a rebel, who fought for his own aggrandisement ; but when he was backed by the cause of the Pathans and their military services, he inaugurated a patriotic movement that helped him on to be the master of the situation. But the country was not ripe for such an enterprise. Pratap flourished in a rude age and had to raise up a backward people. A hard task indeed! Besides, being maddened by temporary success, he could not form any clear idea of the heavy responsibilities of the leader of a commonwealth. He committed political blunders that hastened his fall. So he failed and his cause failed too, never to rise again. But the noble and unselfish aims of a patriotic leader invest his achievements with the halo of undying glory and renown.[14] About Sitaram he holds almost the same opinion. The hero was prepared but the country was in deep slumber. So his attempt failed.

Satish Chandra did not write history to please anybody or any class of people. He tried to write history in accordance with the accepted canons of historical scholarship. No interest, prospect of favour or fear could deflect him from the path of truth. In this respect Tagore's ideal of history was his own.[15] He was not prejudiced against the Muslims ;[16] nor was he biased against any race, creed, class, gotra or family. Neither had he any pre-conceived model or fixed formula. He approached his subject with an open mind and whenever new information was found it was incorporated in his work.[17] Despite this general detachment Satish Chandra, however, appears to be considerably biased in favour of his heroes, Pratap and Sitaram.

Satish Candra calls his methodology scientific. It contains three basic elements—personal inspection of historical sites, critical analysis of myths and legends and use of written documents.[18] It rests on the collation of written documents with other available sources of information. He is a bit sceptical about the authenticity of accounts left by foreigners. He is in-

clined to attach more importance to indigenous sources. Of the indigenous sources, so far as his history is concerned, monuments and inscriptions are rare and coins are meagre. So he had to depend on a variety of sources from myths and traditions to all types of written records, foreign accounts to monuments, inscriptions and coins, and above all, personal inspection of historical sites and collection of materials from the people.[19] Satish Chandra's was thus a composite methodology.

Satish Candra's philosophy of history is somewhat different from that of his contemporary historians. He is of the view that, though a very difficult job, it is nevertheless possible to extract historical truth from a mass of myths and legends. Written historical records are rare (and this is particularly so in the case of local history) and what meagre historical records exist relate mainly to the ruling class and their apparatus of administratson. These give only an idea of the outward form of the history of the country. The inner story remains untold. Thepeople are the soul of a country and their history is the real history.[20] This inner story of the people can not be properly unfolded without social history. "No history" writes Satish Chandra, "can be complete without social history".[21] Political condition, national character, and above all cultural ethos of a people are better reflected in the social history of a country. Further, Satish Chandra's idea of the use of history is a little uncommon. For him it is not an intellectual exercise or a means of satisfying one's intellectual curiosity about the past or of his reader, Its aim is solely the establishment of a rapport between history and the people. People must be made conscious of their history. The study of history is therefore a noble and patriotic task for the historian.[22] This real history of the people is never sought to be detached from their present ; on the contrary an intimate link between the past and present is desirable. Satish Chandra believes that the study of one's own history should be the first step towards the study of history of other countries. Naturally, the starting point should be local history, but local history not in isolation but as a vital link in an indissoluble chain of regional and national history.[23]

Satish Candra was out and out a nationalist. In his writings he gave a direct and open call to his countrymen to participate in the nationalist movement. As the joint editor of *Silpa-o-Sahitya* (Art and Literature) (1904-1905) he wrote three articles, *Bandemataram*, *Rakhibandhan* and *Swadeshi* the import of which was undiluted nationalism. These articles and other writings reveal his deep attachment to and love for the nationalist cause. Even the writing of history was to him a patriotic act. This was the period of the Swadeshi movement in Bengal. The whole country was throbbing with enthusiasm and excitement and the thrust of the movement was felt more deeply in East Bengal (now Bangladesh). Satish Chandra saw this movement unfolding before his eyes.[24] Like many of his generation he saw much virtue in Swadeshi and traditional small scale home production. It is no wonder that Satish Chandra infused patriotic fervour into the heart of his students. His son joined the terrorist movement of Bengal and he refused to dissuade him from his path of idealism.[25] It is quite natural that his nationalist feeling should have some influence on his historical writing. Despite his efforts to maintain detachment, one can easily detect the impact of nationalism in his very approach to his heroes, Praptap and Sitaram. In fact his search for national heroes seems to be the direct outcome of the nationalist spirit.[26]

To Satish Chandra the writing of the history of Jessore-Khulna was almost a mission. Like a missionary he had undergone severe trials and tribulations in the task of searching and collecting materials. And he had collected vast materials for his work. In this respect his work remains unsurpassed. But what is lacking in his history is a systematic and balanced arrangement of subject matter[27] and proper assimilation of raw materials. For future historians it is a mine of information. In its present form it is more in the nature of an encyclopaedia than a compact history of Jessore-Khulna. Another serious drawback to note is his too much dependence on traditions and myths. These no doubt provide clues of history but in order to substantiate them it is necessary to make extensive use of allied disciplines like anthropology, archaeology, [illegible]

numismatics etc.[28] Satish Chandra has just made an attempt but it is incomplete.

Despite these limitations Satish Chandra's *History of Jessore-Khulna* reveals the historian's depth of scholarship, grasp of details, power of marshalling facts and figures and above all a broad historical vision. It is first and foremost a social and cultural history in the political setting. Economic condition of the people receives only a passing reference. As a political history of Jessore it stands on a sure foundation.[29] As a social and cultural history of the districts it is yet to be superseded.

II

Narendranath Ray, a Bengali by birth but long domiciled in Bihar, was fascinated by the history of Bihar because of her close association with all the important periods of Indian history.[30] He was particularly attracted to the history of Bihar in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (1600-1772) because it was not then properly explored. Ray was not a student of history. He was initiated in the field by three contemporary illustrious personalities, Haraprasad Sastri, Jadunath Sarkar and Principal E. A. Horne of Patna College.[31] He also received help and guidance from them. A student of regional history by choice, Ray, however, spared no efforts to collect materials for his subject and presented the results of his research in a balanced and polished language.

Born at Naihati (near Calcutta), Narendranath Ray was a brilliant student of English language and literature in the University of Calcutta.[32] After having his M.A. degree he went to serve T.N. Jubilee College, Bhagalpur, as the teacher of English. Later he became the Principal of this College. In the late twenties he left Bihar and joined the Ripon College (now Surendranath College), Calcutta, as the Principal and Professor of English. That was his last assignment.

The Annals of the Early English Settlement in Bihar (1927) traces the history of the rise of the British power in eastern India from the very inception of the English East India Company (31st December 1600) down to the assumption of

the office of Governor of Bengal by Warren Hastings in 1772. The work is modelled on C. R. Wilson's *The Early Annals of the English in Bengal*. In fact, it is complementary to Wilson's *Annals*. While unfolding the history of Bihar the author has always kept in mind the broad perspective of national history.[33] In a grand national setting he has set forth the initial difficulties faced by the English in Bihar, their efforts to overcome them and an over-all picture of the birth pangs of the British empire in eastern India.

Narendranath Ray collected his materials from many different sources and made excellent use of them. The main source for this period of Bihar's history and his subject is undoubtedly the correspondence of the company's officials with the authorities at home and in India. Ray, however, could not consult the company's papers in England and even in India all correspondence was not then open to the scholars. This was a serious obstacle which he could not overcome. But Ray used all other documentary sources which were then available in India. As regards original sources, he used *Siyar-ul-Mutakherin*, Foster's *Factory Records*, Forrest's *State papers*, Irvine's *Manucci* and Ball's Tavernier, Hunter's *Gazetteer* Streynshan Master's *Diaries*, Hedges' *Diary*, Stavornius's *Voyages*, Bolts' *Considerations on Indian affairs*, Martin's *Eastern India*, Scrafton's *Letter*, and Calcutta Council's Correspondence. He used almost all secondary sources published till then on the subject. Among the most important of them are Bruce's *Annals*, Hunter's *Annals of Rural Bengal*, Carey's *Good old days of the John Company*, Long's *Calcutta and its people*, Verelst's *Narrative*, Holwell's *Interesting Historical Events*, Histories of Mill, Elliot and Campos, Wilson's *Annals*, Orme's *Historical Fragments* and Hill's *Bengal in 1756-57*. Ray made a synthesis of his sources and wrote the *Annals*. It was a simple methodology. Possibly he did not possess adequate knowledge of the developing science of historical criticism.

Narendranath Ray possessed the rare faculty of making the dry facts live which made what he wrote eminently readable. He made his study interesting by alluding to impor-

tant episodes and personalities of English and European history. The picture of the English 'factors' in the seventeenth century was certainly dark and decidedly unpleasant. But the historian took a sympathetic view of them and explained their surroundings and the historical condition that made them so. "But it was small blame to the poor factor that his life was no better and no sweeter. It was the inevitable result of the atmosphere he breathed, the forces that operated on him and the circumstances under which he lived. A half-educated callow youngman, exiled from home, placed beyond the restraints of his society, beset with temptations, enervated by tropical climate, living in the midst of surroundings that reeked with the rank corruption of an empire in a state of dissolution, with money-making as the sole ideal of life and without lawful means to attain his aim, what else could he prove but what he became ?"[34]

Some of Ray's formulations about the history of the period still remain unchallenged. What he said about Murshid Quli's attitude towards the English substantially remains unchanged.[35] "The astute Nabob (Murshid Quli Khan) understood the value of external commerce which had added so much to the wealth of the country though he was too keen a politician not to view with jealousy the fortified factories of the English, their steady endeavour to expand the three villages they had acquired and the way they tried to monopolize trade by claiming the privilege of carrying it on duty free. Exactions and occasional acts of oppression were the means he employed to put the English traders on a par with his other subjects".[36] He rightly assumed that the Marathas spared the English settlements in eastern India in the hope of gaining their co-operation in the task of overthrowing the Muhammedan power. This is proved by their overtures to Clive in 1757 and 1766.[37] Ray's assessment of Aliverdi's treatment of the English still holds the ground. "on the whole, the conduct of Aliverdi, as regards the English, was rather strict than unjust".[38] Again he was right in picking up the real cause of breach between Mir Qasim and the English. "It was the abuse of private trade by the company's servants

and it was on this question of private trade that the breach between the Company and the Nabob became complete".[39] He held Clive's system of dual government partly responsible for the terrible famine of 1770. Other couses responsible for the famine of 1770 were "engrossing of grain" by the *Gomasthas* of the Europeans, the drought, the utter exhaustion of the country for nearly twenty years, the devastation of the Marathas, the exactions of the Nabobs and incessant wars and disease.[40] He had a right perception of the most pressing problems of the period : "The cry for redress raised by the peasantry was worse than the clamour of the unpaid soldiers".[41] That was the general condition all over India.

Narendranath Ray was endowed with a literary talent. He wrote in a beautiful, charming style. His idiomatic language and suave manner remind one of Jadunath's writings. Of Job Charnock he writes, "Job Charnock made it his business from the very outset of his career to gain a thorough knowledge of the people of the country in the midst of whom he had to live and with whom he had to transact business. His unique knowledge of the customs and manners of the country, his clear insight into their character and his command over their language proved a valuable asset to the company".[42] Again, "he was made of such stuff as founders of kingdoms and pioneers are made of—a strong but not an amiable character, a man bent upon doing things but one who cared not what means he employed to attain his ends". The following is his pen-portrait of Mir Qasim : "He (Mir Qasim) was a timid, nervous, amibitous and yet an able and well-meaning man who was driven, by circumstances over which he hardly had any control, step by step into becoming a hateful tyrant and inhuman murderer. He had many good qualities. Though it was certainly an exaggeration to call him an incomparable man, 'an extra-ordinary prince of his age', it must be admitted that his love of justice was keen ; his patience, forbearance, and self-command astonished Hastings...It was a pity that he came into the world when times were out of joint and it was a spite of fate that he was meant to set a wrong world right. Like Hamlet he was devoid of the requisite qualifications for his

mission and he failed miserably and failing involved the country in hideous ruin".[43]

Ray dispassionately narrated the story of British settlement in Bihar, ups and downs in its fortune, ever changing political scenerio, conflict, disorder and uncertainty of the age, British manipulation and political hegemony over the region. He did not pass moral judgment nor did he philosophise over the consequences. He recorded whatever he got from his sources. As he could not tap all the sources his work lacks details. It is rather sketchy. The work also contains a few factual errors.[44] Ray is a good narrator but lacks interpretative power. The economic side of the story deserved more elaborate treatment as it was the economic motivation rather than the hope of political gain that acted as the compelling factor of the company's activities in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Despite these minor faults the work remains a standard regional study on the subject. It has been of some help to those who explored the field after him. His work is remarkably free from regionalism which is almost common with all regional studies. Narendranath's *Annals* is a brilliant sketch of the rise of the British power in eastern India. It offers an integrated picture of developments in eastern India and of those on the national stage. A regional history is a base for pyramidal structure of national history. Viewed from this angle Ray's work provides a strong pillar for the pyramidal history of India.

III

The fashion now in vogue in Indian historical studies is the study of micro history. Micro-history, with its obvious advantages and disadvantages, is the genre of historical literature to which K.V. Krishna Ayyar's studies on Kerala history belong. And his works too bear the strong and weak points of micro history. Himself hailing from Kerala, he knows intimately the country and its people, its peculiar social and political institutions and has an easy access to all indigenous sources of information.[45] But being intellectually and emotionally involved in the locality and in the history of his patron-prince,[46] it has

not been always possible for him to provide a balanced historical perspective. Further, some of the sources for his subject were not accessible to the student in India.[47] Except these limitations, Krishna Ayyar stands out as a competent regional historian, never allowing his study to become an instrument of regional chauvinism. On the contrary, his regional studies help build up an integrated picture of the total Indian scene.

Born in 1894 at Pallavur in the Palghat district of Kerala, Krishna Ayyar was a student of History and Economics in the degree class. Having done his B.A. (Honours) in History and Economics from the University of Madras in 1917, he joined the Zamorin's College (now Guruvayurappan College), Calicut (Kozhikkode) as lecturer in History. While in service he did his M.A. in English language and literature from the same university in 1935. A life-long student of Kerala history and culture, he held important positions in the academic bodies of the state which where devoted to the promotion of historical knowledge.[48] A man of varied interests, he contributed about one hundred short articles to various magazines in English and Malayalam on subjects relating to Kerala.[49]

Apart from his two elementary studies *The Crossing of the Swords and the Bid for Empire* and *An outline History of Greece*,[50] Krishna Ayyar has two regional studies to his credit, *The Zamorins of Calicut* (1938) and *History of Kerala* (1965).[51] The second work, a general history of Kerala, is evidently based on secondary sources. His only original research work is *The Zamorins of Calicut* (from the earliest times down to A.D. 1806). It traces the rise, development and fall from power of the Zamorins of Kozhikkode (Calicut to the Portuguese) who became very powerful in the medieval period of Kerala history. The work is divided into two parts—the arrival of Vasco da Gama from Europe (1498) being the dividing line. Because of the paucity of materials the pre-Vasco da Gama period of the work is sketchy. The post—Vasco da Gama period is given in some detail as there is abundance of materials for this period of Kerala history. The first part deals with the dynasty and the kingdom, customary inauguration of the reign, Kerala and its people, early history, rise of Calicut, the twelve yearly festival

and a century of wars and conquests. The second part is preoccupied primarily with the Portuguese, the conflict with Cochin, the Dutch, the Mysorean onslaught and finally the British take-over. The *History of Kerala* and its abridged form *A Short History of Kerala* unfold the history of Kerala from the earliest times to the formation of the Kerala state in 1956. A historical work of this type is bound to be sketchy, uncritical and descriptive. A book meant for degree students and general readers, it is based primarily on secondary sources. The work is divided into three periods—the age of the Kodungallur Emperors (Cheramans or Cheras, from the earliest times to 1120), the epoch of the Thampurans (Chiefs) (1120-1729), and the period of the 'Silent Revolution' (1729-1947). The period from 1947 to 1956 is a sort of postscript to the long history of Kerala.

The chief feature of the political history of South India in the first period was the struggle between the Pallavas and the Pandyas and the rise of the Cholas. 'The Cheras first supported the Pallavas against the Pandyas, and subsequently the Cholas against both. But as soon as the Cholas established their power they turned against the Cheras. This Chola invasion came to an end only with their withdrawal in 1120, the Cheras disappeared and Kerala broke into a number of petty Kingdoms, each ruled by its own Thampuran'. The epoch of the Thampurans was perhaps the most brilliant period in the history of Kerala. With the accession of Marthandavarma to the throne of Travancore in 1729 and Haidar Ali's invasion of Malabar in 1766 began a new chapter in the history of Kerala. By the year 1799 the English became the master of Kerala and a new era of 'Silent Revolution' and modernisation began.

In the treatment of the Zamorins and the history of Kerala Krishna Ayyar has drawn mainly upon indigenous literary sources and the foreign authorities and materials that were available in India. Obviously some of the foreign sources were beyond him. His works are valuable from the point of indigenous sources and Ayyar has used this material, often difficult and intractable, with discrimination.[52] Admittedly, from the point of view of sources, his works contain many gaps and

imperfections. A diligent research in the archives of the Rajas of Cochin and Travancore and those of the chieftains and vassals of the Zamorin may yield interesting and valuable information.[53] As there is dearth of materials for the period before 1498, he has to depend largely on traditions, myths and legends, estate and temple accounts, sanads of succession, adoption, titles and honour, accounts of festivals and religious ceremonies, and on such works as *Keralolpatti* and *Granthavaris* in Malayalam, *Keralamahatmyam* in Sanskrit and *The Sangam literature* (early Tamil literature). Ayyar holds the view that traditions and myths yield some historical imformation as there is no myth without its -background of facts.[54] Besides indigenous literary sources and traditions, he has collected information from the accounts of Arab and Persian geographers and of Chinese travellers and historians.

For the post-Vasco da Gama period the historian is, however, overwhelmed by the abundance of materials. Apart from the printed secondary sources like *The Book of Duarte Barbosa, Castaneda's History of the Conquest of India, Keralapalama by an unknown author* and *Sheikh Zeinuddin's Tuhfat-ul-Mujahideen*, he has used a large number of original materials available in India. These are The *Press List of Ancient Dutch Rccords, Memoirs of Gollenesse and Moens, Visscher's Letters from Malabar, the Tellicherry Consultaicns and the Report of the Joint Commissioners* (1793). He has also consulted English, Dutch and Portuguese factory records and *memoirs of their governors and Commanders*. For the last years he has used Logan's invaluable *collection of Treaties, engagements etc. relating to British affairs in Malabar*, his *Malabar Manual*, Innes' *Malabar Gazetteer*, Nagamayya's *Travancore State Manual*, Achyutha Menon's *Cochin State Manual*, and Padmanabha Menon's *History of Kerala* in four volumes.

About the origin of the Zamorin family he observes that the ancestors of the Zamorin were the Eradis of Nediyiruppu and later they became the utaiyars of Ernad and founded the dynastic rule.[55] The rise of Calicut, he explains, is at once a cause and a consequence of the Zamorin's ascendancy in Kerala. 'Its trade filled his coffers and enabled him to extend

his authority. And the expansion of his kingdom in turn increased its commerce'.[56] By the end of the fifteenth century the Zamorin of Kozhikkode had become, directly or indirectly, by peacc or war, the ruler of nearly half of Kerala.[57] In the social sphere Ayyar has dealt with several archaic social institutions of Kerala like the matrilineal system of inheritance, Sambandham form of marriage, the Vedic sacrifices, Kuttam or Parusha (local Panchayats), Mamakams and Tai-Puyams (religious festivals) and Kur-Matsaram (traditional hostility). With the establishment of British supremacy ended the medieval period in the history of Kerala. English education created an admiration for English and European institutions. Traditional customs, practices and beliefs were put to the severest scrutiny and those which could not stand the test of the new philosophy .and science were condemned and discarded. This silent revolution also undermined the foundation of age-old untouchability and unapproachability.[58]

Krishna Ayyar has no theory to prove, no model to sustain.[59] He writes history as he collects information and is ready to revise his opinion in the light of fresh evidence that may be discovered in future. He quotes Hecataeus (550 B.C.) to say that history should be based on verifiable evidence.[60] This gives an insight into the methodology he followed and his attitude to sources.

Krishna Ayyar has good command over the language and writes in a smooth, easy style. "The downfall of the Zamorin was brought about not by his European enemies, the Portuguese and the Dutch, nor by his Kerala foes, Travancore and Cochin, but by the Mysoreans".[61] He is also quite at ease in the portrayal of individual personalities. "Every one must admit that Marthandavarma (1729-1758) was great as warrior, statesman and devotee, one might even say that he was an incarnation of the ideal ruler depicted in the Mahabharatha, the Karmayogi that Lord Krishna wanted Arjuna to be. At the same time it can not be denied also that he paid scant respect to 'the Kerala maryada' (political conventions in Kerala).[62] In the art of narration he is also upto the mark: "As the capital of a great kingdom and its chief mart, Calicut,

of course, overshadowed every port and city in the west coast. It was the meeting place of nations, its population was cosmopolitan, consisting of representatives of every race and nationality from the pillars of Heracles to the Land of the Rising Sun".[63]

For Krishna Ayyar, as for many of his professional colleagues, history is the continuous story, based upon evidence, of man living in groups through the ages, from the primitive food gathering stage to that of conquest of the planets.[64] 'It is not a mere story ; it is also a science. Its phenomena are logically connected with one another as those of other sciences. It has its own laws formulated on the same logical principles and in the same manner as other sciences. The only difference between 'history and other sciences is that we can not test historical laws by contrived experiments'. History, he tells us, is philosophy teaching by examples, the examples being themselves the premises on which laws and their tests are based.

Krishna Ayyar, unlike many of his compeers, does not recognise any providential or divine intervention in history. To prove his point he gives two examples from the Bible. The crossing of the strait by Moses and his followers and Mary's conception of Jesus are, in his eyes, nothing more than natural phenomena. God had nothing to do with them. Lastly, according to him 'history can be compared to a court and the historian to a judge. Their qualifications are the same both in knowledge and mental equipment. Both have to collect, interpret and sift their evidence and form their opinion strictly according to the laws of logic. The only difference is that in law the number of appeals is limited and *suo motto* appeals are rare. In history, on the discovery of every new evidence, the historian must *suo motto* reconsider his judgments and affirm, amend or totally reject them.'

In describing the relations of the Zamorins with the Europeans the author has tried to present his patron's predecessors in a favourable light. One gets the impression from his work that the Zamorins were never at a fault. 'The share of the Rajas in policy-making has been unduly exaggerated, proper credit for social reforms and blame for drawbacks in adminis-

tration due to the residents and dewans have been denied to them. The discriminatory policy followed by the Rajas of Kerala towards the Christians, muslim minorities and the backward castes and tribes remains unnoticed.' The rigours of the system of caste, untouchability and unapproachability have not been given due attention. His mental bias for the highest caste in the social scale i.e., the Nampudiris is easily discernible. In his treatment of the Zamorins the economic and social side of the story remains untold. In the *History of Kerala* these have received only a cursory glance. The rise of popular discontent which led to the movement for responsible governments in these native states has bcen completely neglected. Ayyar has given the impression that Travancore was a model state for the rest of India. It is an idealised picture, not the real state of affairs. Finally, art and architecture in Kerala find no place in his works because, the historian honestly confessed, he did not possess sufficient knowledge on the subject.[65]

The *Zamorins of Calicnt* is a pioneering work and as such it has certain limitations. One common charge against this as well as his *History of Kerala* is that foreign authorities and sources have not been tapped and used. They represent only the indigenous version of the story. Even in this respect the works are far from complete. For the early part he has depended mainly on traditions, literary sources and a few inscriptions. Archaeological, numismatic and epigraphic sources remain unused. On his own admission archival sources also were not fully used. Even then his study of the Zamorins of Calicut remains an important piece of researeh work in regional studies. Since the study of micro history has been relatively a late development in India one may take a sympathetic view of his limitations. The importance of the study lies primarily in its being a spade-work on the subject. Krishna Ayyar is considered one of the pioneers in this branch of historical studies which is now increasingly receiving the attention and encouragement of scholars as an important adjunct of national history.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. The study of local history has become popular in recent times. The history of localities, local customs, manners and traditions, research on toponymy, merchant and trade guilds, trade routes, temples etc. have become important in explaining a large segment of social interest and activity.

2. Satish Chandra Mitra, *History of Jessore-Khulna*, Vol. II, pp. 914, 919-920, and Introduction to Vol. I.

3. Khulna was then a sub-division of Jessore district. Bangadarshan, i) Magh 1281 B. S. *Banglar Itihas* (History of Bengal), ii) Agrahayan, 1287 B. S. *Banglar Itihas Sambandhe Kayekti Katha* (a few words about the history of Bengal), iii) Jaistha, 1289 B. S. *Banglar Itihaser Bhagnangsha* (a fraction of the history of Bengal).

4. *History of Jessor-Khulna*, Vol. I, Introduction, p. 6.

5. Ibid., Vol. I, Introduction and Vol. II, p. 920.

6. Vol. II, p. 914.

7. Founded by Brajalal Sastri in 1902. Sastri was an old acquaintance of Satish Chandra.

8. Vol. II, pp. 918-919. His struggling life came to an end in 1931.

9. Most of them appeared in *Bharati*, *Aitihasik-Chitra*, and *Silpa-O-Sahitya* between 1310 B. S. and 1330 B. S. A. R. Mallick, *Modern Historical Writing in Bengali* in C. H. Philips ed., op. cit., pp. 446-460.

10. Vol. I, Introduction, p. 7.

11. Vol. II, p. 923.

12. Vol. I. p. 458.

13. Vol. I, p. 467.

14. Vol. II, p. 407.

15. Tagore's letter to the historian dated 13. 3. 1923 quoted in Vol. I. Tagore wrote, "The purpose of history is not to preach the glory of a country, it is to reveal the truth" (translation mine).

16. Once such a charge was brought against him. The charge, however, appears to be baseless and unfounded.

17. Vol. I, p. 17, for example, birth place of Rup Sanatan, his conclusions about Haridas and Khan Jahan.

18. Vol. II, p. 52 ; ibid., Introduction, p. 11.

19. Vol, II, pp. 53-55. Satish Chandra believed that myths and legends, if carefully handled and properly analysed, could yield valuable historical materials.

20. Vol. II, p. 920.

21. Vol. II, p. 921.

22. Vol. II, Introduction and p. 921.

23. Ibid., pp. 11 & 922.

24. Vol. II, p. 919.

25. Ibid., pp. 913, 926.

26. Amales Tripathi : *Swadeshi, Communalism and the historian*, Ananda Bazar Patrika, No. 168, 15th Bhadra, 1384 B. S. During the period of the Extremist Challenge' (1890-1908) our nationalist leaders were frantically looking for heroes in history. Shivaji in Maharashtra, Siraj, Pratapaditya and Sitaram in Bengal, Ranjit Singh in the Punjab, Pratap in Rajputana and a host of others were taken out of the pages of history to help nationalism.

27. The second volume is mainly devoted to Pratap and Sitaram.

28. Traditions, myths and legends may contain germs of truth. But it is difficult to separate them from the mass of body which is all unreliable. They are important only to indicate 'the level of social culture'. Niebuhr, the great German historian, developed a technique of eliminating errors from legends.

29. Jadunath Sarkar, *Modern Review*, March, 1923.

30. N. N. Ray, *The Annals of the Early English Settlement in Bihar*, Preface.

31. Ibid.

32. See Calcutta University Calendar, 1930.

33. N. N. Ray, *The Annals*, pp. 119-120.

34. Ray, op. cit., p. 63.

35. cf. Abdul Karim, *Murshid Quli and His Times*.

36. Ray, op. cit., p. 142.

37. Ibid., p. 160.

38. cf K. K. Dutta, *Alivardi and His Times*,

39. Ray, op. cit., pp. 210-11.

cf. Nandalal Chatterjee, *Mir Qasim*, p, 219. and H. H. Dodwell, *Dupleix and clive*, p. 236. Both Dodwell and Chatterjee hold the view that the real cause of conflict between Mir Qasim and the English East India Company was the former's 'project of emancipation from English Control'. But the latest view on the subject supports the contention of Ray. Vide N. K. Sinha ed. History of Bengal Vol. III, Ch II pp. 34-38.

40. Ray, *The Annals*, p. 281.

41. Ibid., p, 136.

42. Ibid., pp. 77, 82.

43. Ibid., p. 245.

44. For example, the date of Murshid Quli's death is shown as 1725 which should be 1727.

45. K. V. Krishna Ayyar : *The Zamorins of Calicut*, Foreword, J. A. Thorne.

46. Ayyar received help and encouragement from the Zamorin in writing his history.

47. For example, all Portuguese and Dutch sources were not available in India,

48. Regional Records Survey Committee, Kerala District Gazetteers Committee, Department of Archaeology, State Institute of Encyclopaedic Publications, Research Council of Calicut University, Kerala History Association, Editorial Board, Kerala Charitram.

49. The present writer got biographical details through correspondence with the historian.

50. Beginner's text books on Kerala history and Greece.

51. *History of Kerala* and its abridged version *A Short History* of Kerala are text books for college students. They are primarily based on secondary sources.

52. J. A. Thorne, *Foreword*.

53. Krishna Ayyar himself admits it. Vide Introduction to The Zamorins of Calicut.

54. *The Zamorins of Calicut* : Source, Appendix I.

55. Ibid., p. 79.

56. *The Zamorins*, p. 80.

57. *A short History of Kerala*, p. 75.

58. Ibid., p. 182.

59. History of Kerala, Preface.

60. History of Kerala, introduction vii.

61. *The Zamorins*, p. 238.

62. *A Short History*, p. 106.

63. *The Zamorins*, p. 292.

64. In a long letter to the present writer the historian has been very kind to explain his ideas of history.

65. K. V. Krishna Ayyar, History of Kerala, Preface. Krishna Ayyar has put forward a bold hypothesis that the matrilineal people of Kerala (the Nayars) have strong reasons to be identified with the Aratta Vahikas of the Mahabharata who might themselves have been a branch of the Brahuis of Baluchistan. History of Kerala, pp. 33-36, 56.

Chapter Seven

CONCLUSION

A CRITICAL survey of the writing of Indian history by her own historians in the first six decades of the present century (1900-1960) reveals, apart from a number of minor shifts and tendencies, three distinct trends in the historiographical evolution. These three major trends are Nationalist, Critical-scientific and Marxist. The minor shifts and tendencies relate primarily to regional chauvinism, class bias, racial, communal and caste complexes. The regional study is very helpful in providing a correct historical perspective and discovering local sources of information. In a vast country like India where 'the historical data is so diverse and multilingual,' regional histories may be the ideal base for the study of Indian history and culture. The regional historian is in a better position to make use of all local sources and available literature in local languages and dialects. But all such studies should help in providing 'an integrated picture of the total Indian scene' and should not try to take out the history of any particular region from the main stream of national life. But unfortunately, in some cases, the regional study has been the focal point of regional pride and regional chauvinism.[1] Racial, communal, class and caste complexes also have impeded the development of historical studies in India.

The ideology of Indian nationalism influenced not only the political, economic and social development but largely affected the entire intellectual life of the people—their literature, philosophy, arts and history in the first half of the present century. It is needless to emphasize that there has been an intimate relationship between the study of history and the first stirrings of nationalism in India. The birth and growth of Indian nationalism owe much to historical studies. Conversely, the development of historical studies is indebted to nationalism. Thus in the Indian context both history and

nationalism are indebted to each other. Not only that, as with the Italian Risorgimento and the German Vormärz, history became one of the favourite instruments of the Indian intellectuals during the entire period of national movement. As the nationalist movement gathered momentum, the historians came forward (K. P. Jayaswal, Radhakumud Mukherjee, G. S. Sardesai, R. C. Dutt, M. G. Ranade and others) to unearth and idealise the Indian past. It is only natural that nationalism cast its magic spell on historical studies and has been a powerful driving force in the study of history in the present century. Nationalism as a stimulus may not affect the scientific study of the past. It may be an inspiration in the discovery and interpretation of a country's heritage. But nationalism as a creed may be a positive impediment to an objective and critical study of the past.[2] In the Indian context we find nationalism playing its double role. It is just a stimulus in the case of a few historians like Jadunath Sarkar, Surendranatn Sen and Nilakanta Sastri but in the case of those already mentioned it has been almost a creed. Under its impact they have glorified, the Indian past. There is yet a third category of nationalist historians who may be called the extreme nationalist. The writings of B. G. Tilak, V. D. Savarkar, A. C. Das, Major B. D. Basu and others belong to this group. To heighten the nationalist ferment was their avowed purpose in studying history. Their extreme nationalism is partially responsible for absence in their writings of that detachment, balance and perspective which constitute the foundation of true history. With the coming of independence, however, nationalism as a dominant motive force in the writing of history lost its raison d'etre and more and more Indian historians are taking a dispassionate view of history in the post-independence period.

The second important trend in Indian historiography during the period under study has been the critical scientific approach. Taking their cue from the German savants of the nineteenth century (they put emphasis on two aspects—use of contemporary original sources and dispassionate writing) the Indian historians (R.G. Bhandarkar, Jadunath, Surendra

Nath, Nilakanta Sastri and others) studied history for the sake of truth, not for the sake of glorification of the country, people or race. Historical study was to them a search for truth, whole truth and nothing but truth. Since absolute truth is beyond man, theirs was an attempt to attain approximate truth. In their quest for truth they insisted on the use of inter-disciplinary method, scientific analysis of materials and detachment in writing. They also put emphasis on the use of contemporary original sources. They abhor models, ideologies and fixed ideas. 'The Rankean formula modified by certain needs of the present' (e. g. need to be elegant in the process of communication, claim that the historian must be a judge etc.) is taken to be the aim of this school of historians. But their whole edifice has been mercilessly attacked by a band of scholars in the present century who hold that it is psychologically impossible to be absolutely detached, unbiased and impartial and it is just not possible to attain objectivity in history. Subjectivity is bound to be involved in the process of historical research and writing. "Human life is, in reality, a vital and dynamic affair and can only be discovered, recreated and interpreted by a person as vital as the data which he uses."[3]

With Marx the economic side of history has received due recognition. The materialistic conception of history rests on the premise that 'the possibility of historical change depends upon the changes in the means of production. The study of historical materialism discloses the pattern of human history and gives some indications of how it may be continued in the immediate future'. The relation of Marx with India and Indian history goes as far back as 1853 when he first started writing articles on India.[4] But the penetration of Marxian ideas into Indian historical seholarship is relatively a late phenomenon. Indian historical studies in the light of dialectical materialism began to take shape only in the early decades of the present century. R. P. Dutt, M. N. Ray and D. D. Kosambi are among the pioneers to systematically apply Marxian ideas in the interpretation of Indian history. At present a band of historians has been consciously following the trend.[5] But we

are too near the event to pronounce any judgment on their work. Only the future can take a dispassionate view of their studies.

In the world of Indian historical studies two rival schools of thought are now locked in a bitter ideological struggle. One is Critical—Scientific and the other is Marxist. The former, Rankean in spirit, emphasizes the need to study all types of sources dispassionately and present the result in an impartial and impersonal manner. Opposed to models or theories, the historians of this school, however, are not averse, unlike Ranke, to developing hypotheses or pronouncing judgments. The latter is wedded to the Marxist interpretation of history. Its guiding philosophy is dialectical materialism with all its ramifications—its model of historical development, base-superstructure relations and its view of the shape of things to come. Let the posterity pronounce the final verdict on them.

Lastly, there is a developing trend in Modern Indian historiography represented by the Aligarh School. Most of the historians belonging to this school are inclined towards Marxism. Primarily engaged in the re-interpretation of Medieval Indian history, their main thesis is (i) the Muhammedan invaders of India were all actuated by the motives of conquest and plunder i.e., 'worldly motives'. They had neither religious mission nor proselytizing zeal. Only occasionally religion was used for political gains. (ii) The Medieval Muslim rulers of India were all guided by the policy and reasons of state. The compulsion of Imperial state shaped their attitude to the subject people. (iii) 'All governing classes are wicked'; 'A governing class can only live by misdeeds',[6] the Indian governing class of the medieval period was no exception. (iv) the need to interpret Medieval Indian history in the context of historical development in the world in the corresponding period.

Just as the history of one generation is always unsatisfactory to the next, the historical scholarship of one generation always appears insufficient to its successor. The present generation finds faults with the masters of the earlier genera-

tion. They raise a lot of objections to their methodology, approach, philosophy, in short, the whole attitude to history. They vigorously put forward their own views only to be discarded by the succeeding generation. Not only every generation even every historian has his own way of looking at the past, adding infinite richness and variety to historical studies. Bertrand Russell once wrote that "history makes one aware that there is no finality in human affairs."[7] That is perhaps the last word about the study of history and historians.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For example, some of the writings on Rajput and Maratha histories by the historians of the regions. Genuine patriotism is a noble virtue. It accepts truth, however unpalatable, as its guiding principle. Patriotism shorn of truth may degenerate into chauvinism.

2. J. B. Bury thought that the scientific study of history was hampered by two forces—nationalism and philosophy of history.

3. H. E. Barnes, *A History of Historical writing*, p. 272.

4. K. Marx's Articles on India. Also see M. N. Roy's, *India in Transition*, 1922 and R. P. Dutt, *India Today*, 1947.

5. Following the lead given by kosambi R. S. Sharma, Romila Thapar and others are at present engaged in the re-interpretation of Ancient India, Irfan Habib, Harbans Mukhia and others of Medieval India and Bipanchandra, Tapan Ray chaudhuri and others of the colonial phase of Indian history.

6. Muhammad Habib, Introduction to Elliot and Dowson's History of India (Reprint), K. A. Nizami, Presidential Address, (Medieval India), I. H. C, Allahabad, 1965.

J. N. Sarkar's article in *Quarterly Reiew of Historical Studies* vol. III No. 1 & 2. 1963-64.

7. B. Russell, *Portraits from memory and other essays. History as an Art*, p. 182.

APPENDIX—I

Extracts from Jadunath Sarkar's 'Presidential Address' (in Bengali) to the History Section of the Bangiya Sahitya Sammelan held at Burdwan 1915 (1322 B.S.)

...The best method in historical studies is the scientific method. It does not vary with changes in time, place and subject-matter, for it is equally useful to all branches of knowledge and it is at the core of all forms of truth. We shall harm ourselves if we, out of national pride, ignore this method because of its adoption by the Europeans of modern times. The world will advance, only we will stagnate in an atmosphere of medievalism. Our history that goes against scientific principles will be defective, and the history written by foreigners in accordance with the scientific method and based on truth, will certainly later eclipse our old-fashioned historical fictions. Remember the saying of the saints—'It is truth that prevails, untruth never does'.

One can know the best methodology of history if one understands the purpose of the historian. Real history brings back the past to life and makes it appear before our very eyes. It is as if we enter into the bodies of the men of the distant past, think in their way and feel in our heart their happiness and sorrows, hopes and fears. Thus the real purpose of the study of history is to realise the exact and whole truth about the past.

...But what is the method of determining the truth? First of all, one has to mentally prepare oneself for this task. Removing the desire for worldly gains, fame and position, overcoming inner feelings of hate and love and giving up all pre-conceived notions one has to firmly resolve :

'We shall to-day
Put our mind on truth !
We shall understand truth, worship truth,
And seek truth'

I would not care whether the truth is pleasant or unpleasant, acceptable to the people or opposed to popular notions. I would not care whether it hurts our national pride or not. For the sake of its propagation I shall be ready to suffer reproach or ridicule from the society or friends. But still I shall seek truth, understand truth and accept truth. This should be the firm resolve of an historian. The prevalent notion that it will be disgraceful to the Hindu religion if we consider the earliest history of India and the story of kings in the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* as the product of imagination is to be discarded. One has to take the vow that nothing is to be taken for granted unless it is proved.

...The historian should try his best to eliminate personal error and focus searching light on the same event from different angles. The evidence given by enemies, friends, foreigners and native poets should be weighed carefully and the most trustworthy one accepted. He should also determine how far the evidence is reliable. Only then the real past can be known. In history if one party gets an exparte decree at first it is bound to be upset in the future, for in the court of the world of knowledge the right to appeal never lapses. One can appeal against unjust verdict even hundreds of years later. The final limit to appeal in history is the discovery of truth.

...The knowledge of history is the first step towards national advancement. The success of our national endeavour and the progress of the people's mind along the right track will depend on the extent of our success in discovering the real truth about the past and in the use of the lessons of the past for the present. And our national progress will be as much retarded and the people's efforts rendered fruitless as we will remain satisfied with half-truth and untruth.

History is not poetry. The ultimate result of historical studies is neither entertaining literary fiction nor dry research. Professor Seeley has beautifuly shown that history is the best philosopher, guide and friend for political and social leaders. Knowledge of the past acquired through history should be applied to the present. Having studied the human societies of the distant past and far-off lands, the reasons behind

their rise and fall, growth of state, society and religion and reasons for their collapse we should apply that knowledge for changing the course of our living society. Truth discovered from the past and its shining examples will throw light on our future path. This is the greatest achievement of historical studies.....

(Translation is mine)

APPENDIX—II

Extract from M. G. Ranade's controversial speech delivered at the first 'Industrial Conference' at Poona, 1890 where his attitude to the question of drainage is said to have been explained.

'There are some people who think that as long as we have a heavy tribute to pay to England which takes away nearly 20 crores of our surplus experts, we are doomed and can do nothing to help ourselves. This is, however, hardly a fair or manly position to take up. A portion of the burden represents interest on moneys advanced to or invested in our country and so far from complaining we have reason to be thankful that we have a creditor who supplies our needs at such a low rate of interest. Another portion represents the value of stores supplied to us, the like of which we can not produce here. The remainder is alleged to be more or less necessary for the purposes of administration, defence and payment of pensions and though there is cause for complaint that it is not at all necessary, we should not forget the fact that we are enabled by reason of this British connection to levy an equivalent tribute from china by our opium monopoly. I would not therefore, desire you to divert your energies in the fruitless discussion of this question of tribute, which had better be left to our politicians'.

Extract from M. G. Ranade's *Deccan College Speech*, 1892 wher he visualised the structure of a paternalist state and its true functions.

'The state is now more and more recognised as the national organ for taking care of national needs in all matters likely to be so effective and economic as national effort. This is a correct view to take of the true functions of the state. To relegate them to the simple duty of maintaining peace and order is really to deprive the communities of many of the advantages of social union. Education, both liberal and technical, posts and telegraphs, railways and canal communications, the pioneering of new enterprises, the insurance of risky undertakings—all these functions are usefully discharged by the state.

APPENDIX—III

Extracts from K. A. Nilakanta Sastri's Presidential Address to the Ninth Session of the Indian History Congress held at Patna, 1946.

For unlike several other countries, in India the whole of her past may be said to live and lie coiled up inside the present, potent for good and ill in the shaping of our future.

...The task of history is to reveal the past as it was, for its own sake, and to explain the evolution of the present state of things from the past...The harm that results from one sided history is immense, and when history is used as propaganda the consequences are apt to be deadly. And in the writing of the history of our country the temptation to select some facts and suppress others that go against your thesis, or in your judgment do not redound to your credit, is strong, but must be resisted.

An absolutely objective history is impossible, for the historian cannot cease to be a man ; and here lies the value of different historians dealing with one and the same theme, each in his own way ; they tend generally to correct and supplement one another, and enable their readers to make a nearer approach to historical truth than is possible with the aid of a single work of history. But even for this, it is essential that each historian should accept the ideal of truth and

impartiality, and refrain from deliberate suppression and distortion. Our own Kalhana accepted the ideal whole heartedly and said, "That nobleminded one is alone worthy of praise whose word, like that of a judge, keeps free from love or hatred in relating the facts of the past". We can have no better standard for the historian.

...The historian's work is different from that of the scientist, and possibly more difficult, because at every stage the subject matter of his thought is man and his actions in all their complexity, and the method of experiment under controlled conditions can not guide his speculation....

History has to be scientific in its method, but it has got to be much more. Its task is not merely to ascertain the facts about the past, but to recall them to life. The learned monograph is not history; in a true history learning should underlie the narrative, but not overwhelm it. And the appeal of history to the enlightened mind is in the last resort poetic.

APPENDIX—IV

Extract from Kosambi's article The Study of Ancient Indian Tradition published in Indian Historical Research Institute Silver Jubile Commemoration volume, Bombay, 1953. PP 196-197.

Ancient India has no chronology at all even remotely comparable to that of Egypt or Sumeria...yet India has a history in the truest sense of the word, though it can not be extracted without considerable difficulty and mastery of diverse techniques...The successive shifts in relations of production are what is generally called history, which obviously can not be studied scientifically without considering the means of production as well. For societies like the Ancient Indian, the change may be so slow as to possess no explosive or critical events (revolutions) to make a transition; often the expression of change survives only as change of religion. In effect, (h

static form of society implies that the productive basis did not change radically from a rather primitive level.

...Historical periods must be demarcated according to the means and relations of production, not by fortuitous changes of dynasty or battles. But it must be recognised that major wars, great changes in rulers, significant religious upheavals do often signalise fundamental changes in the productive relations of the people. That such critical changes manifest themselves through wars or reformation in religion is due to the undeveloped stage of society with its attendant concealment of the true social forces guiding or forcing historical development.

Extract from Kosambi's article *On a Marxist Approach to Indian History*. Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute Journal XXXI, Poona, 1951. P 258.

APPENDIX—V

(*K. V. Krishna Ayyar's Thoughts on History.*)

Derived from the Greek *Historia*, meaning Inquiry, History is the continuous story, based upon evidence, of Man living in groups. Beginning from his quest for food thousands and thousands of year ago, it has extended now to his dreams and hopes of even the colonisation of the various planets. If God had made Man in His image, it is not impossible that one day Man may become God Himself.

Before the invention of writing, our evidence mainly consisted of memories, transmitted from one generation to another by word of mouth. Our *Puranas* called *Smrithis*, or what is remembered, contain a lot of information about our past. Unfortunately they are not chronologically arranged, and their reliability is considerably eroded by omissions and additions, transpositions and mix-ups so much so that the popular faith even in the *Bhagavadgita* has now been questioned.

Archaeology is bringing to light many an ancient relic;

but till now it has not given us any precise dates. The Megaliths only indicate the movement of culture from the east to the west. They do not tell us when.

With the invention of writing we enter upon firm ground. Thanks to the labours of our research scholars the historian can not now complain of dearth of evidence. Its abundance may become even a handicap for the future. And the historian is likely to lose the forest in the trees.

The sources may also be biassed : the victor's account of a battle must necessarily be different from that of the vanquished ; and it will be very difficult for the historian to see the obverse and the reverse at the same time and form a picture.

Words also have changed and are changing their meaning. The word *Parisha (Parishad)* originally denoted only the assembly of the Brahmins living in one and the same village. Gradually it came to be applied also to the assemblies of other castes living there. For want of exact equivalents translations might easily mislead. Thus, the Malayalam *Chaver*, he who deliberately courted death in the noble task of avenging his master's death, has been translated into Portuguese as *Amochi* or people who run amuck and kill people until they are themselves killed !

Ancient customs should be assessed not according to what they have become now but according to the circumstances and the conditions in which they had their origin. Thus, the *vamachara* worship *(worship with Matsya, Mamsa, Madya, Maithuna and Mudga)* had its origin as a discipline. Deemed the most despicable and loathsome, the worship with them as an offering came into existence in order to enable the disciple to conquer his aversions to them, God or divinity being inherent in even what is most disgusting. Gautam Buddha is said to have been tasting his own faeces off and on to cast off his disgust and realise this immanent divinity.

History does not recognise any providential or divine intervention. The ebb tide which enabled the Jews to cross the strait and the flow tide which destoryed the pursuing Egyptians when they appeared later was no more than the rhythmic

daily fall and rise of the sea, the Jews happening to arrive after the fall had begun and the Egyptians coming late after the fall had given place to the rise. There is nothing peculiar in Mary's conception of Jesus. By the time of Mary and Jesus the betrothed had begun to bed together in the bride's house and the children thus born had begun to be recognised as legitimate, though born before marriage.

History is not a mere story ; it is also a science. Its phenomena are logically connected with one another as those of other Sciences. It has its own laws, formulated on the same logical principles and in the same manner as other sciences. The only difference between other Sciences and History is in History we can not test its laws by contrived experiments. History is philosophy teaching by examples, the examples being themselves the premises on which the laws and their tests are based.

History can be compared to a Court and the Historian to the Judge. Their qualifications are the same—both in knowledge and mental eqipment. Both have to collect, interpret and sift their evidence and form their opinion strictly according to the Laws of Logic. The only difference is in Law the number of appeals is limited and *suo motto* appeals are rare. In History, on the discovery of every new evidence, the Historian must *suo motto* reconsider his judgments and affirm, amend or totally reject them.

(This is taken from the historian's letter to the author referred to earlier.)

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