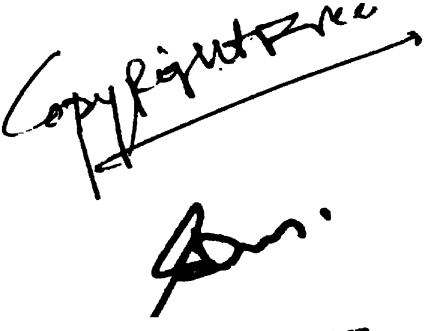

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British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance

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The Dynamics of Indian Modernization 1773-1835

DAVID KOPF

FIRMA K. L. MUKHOPADHYAY
Calcutta • India 1969

To my wife, Mary Alice

PREFACE

"Selecting the major theme for your first work of scholarship is like selecting a wife," Stephen N. Hay once cautioned me while I was under his guidance at the University of Chicago. He added, "in either case, the better the choice, the more enduring and fruitful the relationship." As early as 1958, while still a graduate student at Chicago, I had made my choice, and the results of the first nine years of "marriage" with the Bengal renaissance are contained in the pages of this book.

In retrospect, I should say that I chose the topic because I believed that an exhaustive treatment of it, with reasonable objectivity, would at least partly answer two central questions in modern Indian history. As a rule, the Indian renaissance of the nineteenth century is treated within the context of cultural continuity and change under British colonialism. Therefore, the historiography of that renaissance is divided between the advocates of British "impact" and the advocates of Indian "response." If British influence is considered paramount, then the writer stresses change and regards the renaissance as a form of Westernization or modernization. If, on the other hand, Indian response is stressed, then the focus is on the Indian heritage, and the renaissance is viewed as a reinterpretation of tradition. Not infrequently, scholars have looked upon the phenomenon as a synthesis between "East and West."

If a study of the Bengal renaissance should tell us something vital about the continuing problem of tradition versus modernity in India, it should also reveal to us something equally significant about the origins of nationalism there. Indeed, as several writers have intimated, renaissance and nationalism are so closely related in India that it is often difficult to distinguish one from the other. For example, do we characterize the new sense of community (in Hindu India) based on language, religion, customs, manners, literature, and

history as renaissance or as nationalism? Is renaissance simply a misnomer for the prepoliticized stage of cultural nationalism? Finally, just as in the case of renaissance and cultural change, we are compelled to raise the complex question of the relationship between nationalism and modernity. Which is the more fitting framework for such analysis: Westernization or the reinterpretation of tradition?

It was thanks to many individuals at the University of Chicago that I gained the orientation which first prompted me to ask these and other such questions. Stephen Hay introduced me to the problem of tradition and modernity in nineteenth century Bengal. I am greatly indebted to Edward Dimock for his having shared with me his understanding and appreciation of the uniqueness of Bengali language and literature. Milton Singer imparted a deep understanding of cultural relativity and the conviction that cultural anthropologists can profit as much from historical perspective as cultural historians can profit from applying anthropology to the past. Others in the stimulating Chicago atmosphere, notably Edward Shils and Daniel Borstin, led me to the belief that intellectual history is not a study of the intrinsic evolution of ideas but of the sociology of knowledge. I am grateful also to the comparativists among the South Asianists and historians at Chicago who widened horizons for me in helping me to see the Bengal renaissance in sweeping perspective. I am profoundly grateful to the Ford Foundation for a Foreign Area Training Fellowship which made possible two years of research in India and England, and to the Research Council of the University of Missouri for its financial assistance in the preparation of my manuscript for publication.

Above all, I should like to express my appreciation to the librarians who graciously offered their specialized knowledge and the use of special collections. Data on the College of Fort William were derived largely from a well-preserved collection of Council Proceedings at the National Archives in New Delhi. Much of the material for reconstructing the history of Orientalism in India came from collections in the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the Sanskrit College Archives, and the West Bengal Record Office—all three in Calcutta. Information about missionary activity in Bengal was obtained from both the Baptist Mission Archives in London and the William Carey Library in Serampore. The portrayal of the Bengali intelligentsia was derived from a wide variety of sources gathered together mostly from Calcutta libraries such as the National Library

and the Bangiya Sahitya Academy. Numerous administrative records, newspaper files and contemporary tracts at the India Office Library were invaluable assets to me in gaining an understanding of the British side of the cultural encounter with India.

I should also like to thank others who have read the manuscript at various stages of its development and offered me advice on how I could improve the book. For their constructive criticism, I am much indebted to my wife, to Robert Crane of Duke University, to Ainslee Embree of Columbia University, to Roderick McGrew of the University of Missouri, and to Richard Adloff of the University of California Press.

DAVID KOPF

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INTRODUCTION

> The greatest gift of the English, after universal peace and the modernization of society, and indeed the direct result of these two forces—is the Renaissance which marked our 19th century. Modern India owes everything to it.
>
> —SIR JADUNATH SARKAR, 1928

This book is an account of the social, cultural, psychological, and intellectual changes that were brought about in the Indian region of Bengal as a result of contact between British officials and missionaries on the one hand and the Hindu intelligentsia on the other. If defined properly, the term "intelligentsia" is a useful analytical tool for a deeper understanding of cultural exchange between Western and non-Western civilizations during our so-called age of Western dominance. The term is derived from a Russian word denoting a European-educated class of professional intellectuals who found themselves increasingly alienated from Russian society and government in the nineteenth century. Created in response to external pressures, the intelligentsia experienced a crisis of identity characterized chiefly by its ambivalent attitude to revolutionary social change in Western Europe. The schism between Westerners and slavophiles—between those xenophiles who succumbed to the lure of the contemporary West and those xenophobes who maintained their loyalty to Russia's Slavic spirit and culture—became the prototype for all such subsequent divisions in the ranks of the non-Western intelligentsia. On the basis of the Russian image of intelligentsia, a number of cultural historians and cultural anthropologists developed the idea of the marginal man "born to be unhappy."

Arnold Toynbee, among others, helped universalize the notion of intelligentsia by assigning to it the function of mediator between cultures. The intelligentsia arises, says Toynbee, "in any community that is attempting to solve the problem of adapting its life to the rhythm of an exotic civilization to which it has been forcibly annexed or freely converted." Toynbee goes on to argue that to preserve their culture from alien inroads, the intelligentsia serves as "a class of liaison officers who have learnt the tricks of an intrusive civilization's trade. . . ."[1]

The period covered in this study spans the years 1772–1830; and in the context of British cultural policy in India, I have taken the liberty of calling this the era of Orientalism. Though a highly formative period in the history of modern India, the historical literature on the cultural impact of British Orientalism is virtually nil. Probably the only full-length monograph on the Orientalist movement which treats the many ramifications of the Orientalists' policies in South Asia is B. K. Boman-Behram's *Educational Controversies in India: The Cultural Conquest of India Under British Imperialism.* Most other sources refer to one or another of the Orientalist contributions and generally in relation to the famous Orientalist-Anglicist controversy of the 1830's. D. P. Sinha in his *Educational Policy of the East India Company in Bengal to 1854,* has written a balanced account of their educational philosophy and accomplishments. R. D. Basu has summed up the sympathetic view of Orientalists by Indian nationalists in *Education in India Under the East India Company.* Bengali literary historians, such as S. K. De in a work *Bengali Literature in the Nineteenth Century,* usually emphasize the linguistic contribution of the Orientalists in modernizing the popular languages of India. H. Pedersen's *The Discovery of Language: Linguistic Science in the Nineteenth Century,* is typical of the European scholarship which periodically celebrates Orientalist pioneering achievements in comparative philology. As evidenced in R. Schwab's *La Renaissance Orientale,* European scholarship has been equally enthusiastic about Orientalist archeological and historical studies. Finally, the import of the movement is conveyed through an occasional biography of an Orientalist or through a monograph on an Orientalist institution.[2]

[1] A. Toynbee, "The Disintegration of Civilizations," *A Study of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), V, 154–158.

[2] For recent examples of biographies, see V. A. Narain, *Jonathan Duncan and Varanasi* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1959); G. Canon,

With respect to Indian accommodation to British Orientalism, the same years witnessed the genesis of what has not infrequently been called the Bengal renaissance. The literature of the nineteenth-century Bengal renaissance falls into two broad categories: the popular image of the renaissance among Bengalis proud of their recent heritage and the scholarly notion of renaissance as a problem in British Indian historiography. Though the interpretations vary, most writers have attributed to William Jones (1746–1794) the phenomenal discovery of the Aryan golden age; to Rammohun Roy (1772–1833) the role of progenitor of all modern reform movements in India; and to William Carey (1761–1834) the honor of having been father of modern Bengali prose. These figures together symbolize the composite nature of the renaissance as historical rediscovery, linguistic and literary modernization, and socio-religious reformation.

Though it is by no means certain when the term renaissance was first used in nineteenth-century Calcutta, Rammohun Roy referred to recent events in Bengal as being analogous to the European renaissance and reformation. Rammohun allegedly told Alexander Duff, the missionary, that "I began to think that something similar to the European renaissance might have taken place here in India."[3] The Bengali novelist Bankim Chandra Chatterji (1838–1894) frequently employed the word renaissance either in the context of a revitalized Bengali language or literature or as the modern reinterpretation of the Hindu tradition. In 1894, the Hindu nationalist and philosopher, Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950), wrote a series of essays on *Bankim Chandra Chatterji* in which he continually used renaissance to depict the age of the great Bengali novelist and of his entire generation of intellectual and creative giants. One type of source that was apparently instrumental in popularizing the concept of the Bengal renaissance was the autobiography of the Bengali nationalist. Bepin Chandra Pal (1858–1932), for example, in his *Memories of My Life and Times*, looked at the whole of the nineteenth-century background as a glorious period of renaissance.

The setting for the two generations of introduction between

Oriental Jones (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1964). Excellent monographs have appeared on Orientalist experiments in higher education, such as the one on Sanskrit College in B. N. Bandyopādhyāy, *Kalikātā soṅgskrīt kolejer itihās, 1824–1858* (Kalikātā: soṅgskrīt kolej, 1948).

[3] Quoted in G. Smith, *Life of Alexander Duff* (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1879), I, 118.

Western and Eastern civilization was the colonial metropolis of Calcutta. Between 1773, when Warren Hastings selected Calcutta as the future capital of British India, and 1828, when Governor-general Lord Bentinck challenged Orientalist cultural policy, Calcutta—earlier than any other Asian city—experienced what Daniel Lerner, among other typologists of modernization, has described as the transformation of a traditional society.[4] Before Bentinck arrived on the scene, Calcutta already had a school system using European methods of instruction and textbooks. On their own initiative, the urban elite had founded Hindu College, the only European-style institution of higher learning in Asia. Newspapers, periodicals and books were being published regularly in English and the indigenous languages. The city had a modern public library. Perhaps most important, Calcutta boasted a native intelligentsia conversant with events in Europe, aware of its own historical heritage, and progressively alert about its own future in the modern world.

The representatives of the British nation in India who were largely responsible for these positive aspects of Westernization and modernization were a group of "acculturated" civil, military, and judicial officials (and some missionaries) whom we identified as Orientalists. Since the acculturation pattern of the European in India is of critical importance throughout the book, the concept of acculturation requires some clarification. In 1954, at the Social Science Research Council Summer Seminar on Acculturation, the process was broadly defined as "culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous culture systems." The type of acculturation with which this book is concerned is the process that results from an extreme power differential between a Western society that is technologically and militarily superior and a non-Western society that is not. Specifically, what changes occur to either Europeans or Indians under British colonialism? The scholarship of West–non-West contact under recent European colonialist expansion has tended to define acculturation in terms of the patterned response of the weaker society to the impact of the dominant society. In this context, E. A. Hoebel has defined acculturation as "the process of interaction between two societies by

[4] Lerner lists the varieties of physical, social, and psychic—as he terms it—mobility in the context of urbanization as the three vital components that underlie the dynamics of modernization. For a fuller description of his West Asia model, see D. Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964).

which the culture of the society in subordinate position is drastically modified to conform to the culture of the dominant society."[5]

The study of Bengal under British Orientalism that was pursued in preparing this book not only questions the validity of the one-sided definition of acculturation but suggests the need to explore deeply the little-researched influence of the subordinate culture on the transplanted agents of European colonialism. What develops in nineteenth-century Calcutta is a two-sided process of acculturation, or the merging of interests and identities by representatives of civilizations in encounter.

The period of contact between cultures is of no small importance. Most of the Orientalists were not nationalists in the nineteenth-century Victorian sense. On the contrary, they were products of the eighteenth-century world of rationalism, classicism, and cosmopolitanism. Unlike later Englishmen serving in South Asia, they mastered at least one Indian language and used that particular language fruitfully for scholarly research. Many Orientalists—notably William Jones, H. T. Colebrooke, William Carey, H. H. Wilson, and James Prinsep—made significant contributions to the fields of Indian philology, archeology, and history. Moreover, these Orientalists did not ensconce themselves in clubs or build a Chinese wall of racial privilege to keep the "inferior races" they ruled at a distance. Instead, the Orientalists formed enduring relations with members of the Bengali intelligentsia to whom they served as sources for knowledge of the West and with whom they worked to promote social and cultural change in Calcutta.

Therefore, in these pages, the era of British Orientalism and the Bengal renaissance is a history of two civilizations in contact, of the institutional innovations that served as networks of interaction between them, and of the unique patterns and universal processes of culture change that resulted from them. Years of trial and error as a research scholar convinced me that an exacting analysis of the data on cross-cultural influences could provide a number of very useful insights concerning the interaction of tradition and modernity under British colonialism.

In 1958, when I first began my exploration of the perplexing, multi-faceted world of the Bengal renaissance, I diligently sought some solid footing between European "impact" and Indian "response," at a juncture of acculturation and diffusion, from which

[5] E. A. Hoebel, *Man in the Primitive World* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1958), p. 643.

I might view both sides of the encounter with sympathy and comprehension. By 1961, when I went abroad to continue my research, I had decided that the most rewarding method for studying interaction was to investigate the organized behavior of Englishmen and Indians who associated together for a common purpose. I had, in Bronislaw Malinowski's words, determined a pivotal social unit for cultural change:[6] it was a training center for British civil servants in India known as the College of Fort William.

It was that college, established in Calcutta by Governor-general Wellesley in 1800, which seemed to afford the almost perfect institutional setting for studying the results of British-Indian contact and accommodation. The college was the first European-created institution of higher learning in India to welcome Indians as faculty members and to encourage cultural exchange between Europeans and South Asians. By enlisting the support of qualified Orientalist scholars to improve its educational program, this college also transformed the famed Asiatic Society of Bengal and William Carey's Serampore Mission into highly effective agencies for the revitalization of an Indian culture.

Such histories of encounter between representatives of advanced civilizations are immensely complex and do not lend themselves easily to monocausal, deterministic interpretations. We need to know as much of the European background which shaped the mind of an early-nineteenth-century transplanted Englishman as we do of the Indian experience which provided the environment for a special acculturation process. On the one level, this process can be understood by means of a straightforward institutional-

[6] For Malinowski, cultural change could take place only through some means of organized behavior. According to him, "The invention of a new technological device, the discovery of a new principle, or formulation of a new idea, a religious revelation or a moral or aesthetic movement, remain culturally irrelevant unless and until they become translated into an organized set of cooperative activities." B. Malinowski, *A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 43. In an essay in the same volume on "The Concrete Isolates of Organized Behavior," Malinowski analyzes these organizations or institutions in terms of their components: charter (system of values), personnel, norms, material apparatus, activities and function (integral result of organized activities), p. 53. Malinowski concludes (p. 54) that "the institution is the real isolate of cultural analysis. . . . No element, trait, custom, or idea is defined or can be defined except by placing it in its relevant and real institutional setting."

functional type of interpretation.[7] This kind of sociological interpretation explains how the need for implementing British cultural policy led to the formation of experimental associations which exposed the Englishmen to a widening set of relationships with Indians and which resulted in a merging of interests between the two communities. The significant factor in the merger of interests, it seems evident, was the Englishman's new appreciation for the Indian heritage and culture, and the key for unlocking the door to both was linguistic competence in Oriental languages.

The sociological approach to the encounter between cultures is, however, but one side of the story. It seems to me that the scholar who studies acculturation must inevitably address himself also to the problem of merging identities and to the perplexing array of attitudes and values which hinder or facilitate the process.[8] To be sure, the psychology of encounter is often difficult to document and for some it is like opening Pandora's box. For me, the use of the psychological dimension of analysis came not out of mere intellectual curiosity but from the need to answer certain questions and from the growing realization that the book would not be complete otherwise. How else, for example, can we fully understand the conflict of cultural values between the British in India known as the Anglicist-Orientalist controversy? In the 1830's the Orientalists found their modernizing program challenged by an alternative program advocated by such dedicated Westernizers as Thomas B. Macaulay. The Westernizers proposed that Indians thoroughly assimilate themselves to British culture, arguing that there was no other valid passport to modernity. Why this apparently invidious comparison between cultures? Did the Anglicist's view of modernity in the European context shape his attitude toward Indian culture or was it the Anglicist response to Indian culture that shaped his view of modernity? How did the Bengali respond to the new downgrad-

[7] What is here referred to was clearly expressed by Malinowski in his "What Is Culture," p. 39: "For function cannot be defined in any other way than the satisfaction of a need by an activity in which human beings cooperate, use artifacts, and consume goods. Yet this definition implies another principle with which we can concretely integrate any phase of cultural behavior. The essential concept here is that of organization. In order to achieve any purpose, reach any end, human beings have to organize."

[8] See, for example, the excellent article by M. Matossian, "Ideologies of Delayed Industrialization: Some Tensions and Ambiguities," *Journal of Economic Development and Cultural Change*, VI (April, 1958), 217–228.

ing of the Indian tradition? For years he had accepted Western educational, scientific, and moral ideas and ideals when these were introduced by Orientalists who were themselves favorably disposed to many Indian cultural values.

In dealing with such questions, this book adduces evidence that, although psychology did not determine the dynamics of encounter, it was a vital element in those dynamics, which it would be unwise to ignore. That the economic factor was equally important is explained in the chapters dealing with the origins of Serampore Mission and with the distribution of patronage at the College of Fort William. The nature of the considerations involved in writing a history of encounter, therefore, is less conceptual (utilizing the facts to prove or disprove a theoretical scheme) than organizational (showing the interrelation and interpenetration of the sociological, psychological, economic, and other causal threads).

A tentative description of the Bengali intelligentsia during the Orientalist era indicates why a multi-dimensional approach to encounter is necessary. Between 1800 and 1830, in Calcutta, the Bengali intellectual was a confused but optimistic individual striving to reconcile partially digested alien traits and unsatisfactory indigenous traditions. He established relationships with British civil servants, businessmen and missionaries both for profit and to use them as windows to the West. It was his good fortune that the distance between Britain and India was great and that the Orientalists with whom he came into contact had already become "Indianized." The Bengalis' view of the West during the sympathetic Orientalist period helped to establish good rapport between European and Indian and offered a hope for the future.

However, the Bengali intellectual of the early 1800's was insecure psychologically, not only because he was involved in the confrontation of two cultures but also because he was made aware of a newly discovered historical dimension. The Orientalists imparted to him their evocation of an Indian golden age while the Serampore missionaries transmitted a Protestant concept of the European medieval period as a dark age. Both inspired in the Bengali a belief in the perfectability of all mankind. On the one hand, the intelligentsia regarded themselves as the products of an exhausted culture and on the other, as representatives of a culture organically disrupted by historical circumstances but capable of revitalization.

The Bengali's psychological uncertainty was heightened by the social consequences of his newly formed relationship with the European. He found himself the nucleus of an expanded network of contacts and loyalties. The intellectual often combined within himself, as it were, the attributes of the Hindu trinity of Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu, conceiving of himself, in relation to his own society, as creator, destroyer, and preserver. Like his counterpart in modern Japan, he sought to create new levels of social consciousness while destroying decadent social behavior, at the same time that he strove to preserve satisfying social ties with family, kin, and the transcendent society of the sacred. For example, Rammohun Roy's adherence to the spirit of Utilitarian rationalism, his affinity for Sufi mysticism, his admiration for Christ, his emotional identification with the Vedic age, and his reluctance to part with the Brahmanical sacred thread were not simply the logically inconsistent beliefs and practices of a superficially rational Westernized intellectual. Regarded in the light of his own milieu, Rammohun was a sensitive human being who apparently had already reconciled two indigenous traditions in his mind when he found it necessary to readjust to the British culture pattern. Indeed, the intellectual eclecticism, the disparity between word and deed, public performance, and private behavior which many find disturbing about such a man as Rammohun Roy, and which persisted in other Bengalis throughout the century, simply reflected the struggle to avoid sinking into the quicksand of impending modernization.

My earnest hope is that this book will prove useful to my colleagues in Bengali studies and to other South Asia specialists. Scholars to whom the theme of Western intrusion and Asian response is an intriguing one might find the book useful for its historical disclosures and for the way in which they are interpreted. I also gladly offer the Bengal "model" to the typologists of modernization, who have made great advances in recent years in providing their own conceptual schemes for the comparative study of social, cultural, and political change in the non-Western world.

PART I

The Birth of British Orientalism 1773-1800

Historically, European oriental research rendered a service to Indian and Asiatic nationalism which no native could ever have given. . . . The resuscitation of their past fired the imagination of the Hindus and made them conscious of a heritage of their very own which they could pit not only against the Muslims' but also against that of the more virile English. Psychologically, the Indian people crossed the line which divides primitive peoples from civilized peoples.

—NIRAD CHAUDHURI

I

The Cultural Policy of Warren Hastings

When Warren Hastings returned to Bengal for the second time in 1772, he found himself confronted with what a parliamentary committee spokesman once referred to as "the most atrocious abuses that ever stained the name of civil government."[1] A generation of rapacious Company servants in search of quick profits had unabashedly ravaged Bengal and left the once fertile province "a confused heap as wild as the chaos itself."[2] The "shaking of the pagoda tree"[3] had culminated in the 1769–70 famine—which provided an additional source of profits from rice speculation—and left the miserable populace "feeding on the dead."[4] News of the famine that reached London impelled Horace Walpole to repudiate his countrymen abroad: "We have outdone the Spaniards

[1] Burgoyne Report, cited by N. K. Sinha, *The Economic History of Bengal* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhay, 1962), I, p. 186. The best source for a comprehensive list of the abuses by Company officials in Bengal between 1757–1770 may be found in "Reports from the Committee Appointed to Enquire into the Nature, State and Condition of the East India Company and of the British Affairs in East India," *Reports From Committees of the House of Commons, 1772–1773*, Vol. III (London, 1803).

[2] For a reliable report on the chaotic situation in Bengal as Hastings viewed it, see A. M. Davies, *Strange Destiny, A Biography of Warren Hastings* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1935), pp. 61–63.

[3] This expression is taken from the chapter title, "First Shaking of the Pagoda Tree," in G. T. Garrett, E. Thompson, *Rise and Fulfillment of British Rule in India* (reprinted; Allahabad: Central Book Depot, 1962), pp. 98–111.

[4] W. W. Hunter, *Annals of Rural Bengal* (London: Smith, Elder, 1897), p. 53.

in Peru. They were at least butchers on a religious principle, however diabolical their zeal. We have murdered, deposed, plundered, usurped—nay, what think you of the famine in Bengal in which three millions perished being caused by a monopoly of the servants of the East India Company?"[5]

Between the victory at Plassey in 1757 and Hastings's second arrival, the English in Bengal had changed radically from "pettifogging traders quarreling over their seats in church . . . into imperialist swashbucklers and large scale extortionists."[6] Often called the "Clive generation" after the noted but ill-starred empire-builder, they benefited from an ironic political situation.[7] The local governor or Nawab, who ruled, did so without power, while the Company, which held the power, refused the responsibility of administration. This peculiar power vacuum was accentuated by the gradual disappearance between 1757 and 1765 of the Dutch and French commercial interests as restraining influences in the region.

Warren Hastings himself represented the transformation from merchant to empire-builder. He had first come to Bengal in 1750 at seventeen and, like other Company agents, began his career as a lowly clerk at £5 a year. When he left India in 1764, he had accumulated a fortune of £30,000.[8] Like Clive, Hastings returned to Bengal as a virtual Caesar entrusted with the political and military responsibility of preserving the Company's possessions from the inroads of other Indian powers.

Warren Hastings underwent a significant transformation that set him apart from the majority of his peers and made him the prototype of a new kind of civil servant in India. Most Company agents, according to Percival Spear, were "frequently ignorant of the country languages and the debased Portuguese, . . . the lingua franca of the coast, was all they acquired."[9] Hastings, on the other hand, as an Indian admirer of his reminds us,

[5] Walpole Speech, cited in *Cambridge History of India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1929), V, 187.

[6] P. Spear, *The Nabobs* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 23.

[7] For a classic biography of Clive, the man who won the Battle of Plassey in 1756, carved out a domain for himself in Bengal, and later died in poverty in England, see H. Dodwell, *Dupleix and Clive* (London: Methuen and Co., 1920).

[8] For a well-documented survey of the early years of Hastings in India (1750–1764), see Davies, pp. 14–51. See also commentary of compiler and letters by Hastings in *Memoirs of the Life of Right Honorable Warren Hastings*, comp. G. R. Gleig (London: Richard Bentley, 1841), I, 32–132.

[9] Spear, *Nabobs*, p. 127.

> knew that the quickest route to the heart of a people is through the language of the country and had accordingly proficiency in Bengali and Urdu, besides a fair acquaintance with Persian, the language of the Muslim Court. Sitting in a remote Bengali town, with ample leisure for reflection, Hastings wondered at the vastness of the country, its richness and variety, and above all the antiquity and splendour of its civilization.[10]

Despite the commonly held notion of the Indianized Englishman of the late eighteenth century, there is little evidence to suggest the existence, until the advent of the Hastings administration, of official encouragement of more constructive forms of culture contact. To be sure, there were isolated individuals in Company service —men like Alexander Dow and J. Z. Holwell—who acquired an intellectual appreciation of Indian civilization similar to that of Hastings.[11] But in the majority of cases, for the reason that relationships between Company servants and their Bengali agents were built almost entirely on commercial dealings, to cultivate one another's languages for other than economic gain seemed inconceivable.[12]

In short, the post-Plassey political vacuum in Bengal was accompanied by a kind of cross-cultural vacuum. Though Englishmen lived with Indian women, appreciated Hindustani dancing girls and acquired a taste for smoking the huka, they were still alien freebooters longing to return home shouldering their bags of riches.[13]

The disastrous impact of the Bengal famine on Company profits prompted the reversal of British policy in India. As Spear described the situation:

[10] V. B. Kulkarni, *British Statesmen in India* (Calcutta: Orient Longmans, Ltd., 1961), pp. 28–29.

[11] Zephania Holwell, whom we generally associate with the Black Hole incident of 1756, was apparently also a student of "Hindoo antiquities" and published works on "Indian politics and mythology." He was important for the European image of India because he "was one of Voltaire's main sources of information about India." See A. Aronson, *Europe Looks at India* (Bombay: Hind Kitabs, 1945), p. 17. Alexander Dow was a far more ambitious scholar very close to the later Orientalists both in his debt to the eighteenth-century *philosophes* and in the quality of his scholarly output between 1768 and 1774. For additional information, see the excellent analysis of "Alexander Dow: Philosopher and Mercantilist," in R. Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal: An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement* (Paris: Mouton and Company, 1963), pp. 21–42.

[12] Spear, *Nabobs*, p. 127.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 131.

> Bengal and Bihar, for the first time in centuries, were seriously underpopulated for two generations. It dealt a heavy blow at the whole social system. Many of the *zemindars* or hereditary farmers of the revenue, were ruined as the result of inability to collect regular assessments from a reduced and enfeebled peasantry. Hunter dates the ruin of two-thirds of the old aristocracy from this time. The loss both of artisans and cultivators caused a steady decrease in the Company's profits and so hurried on the financial crisis of 1772 which led to state interference in the Company affairs.[14]

On August 6, 1772, the reform intent of the Court of Directors was made clear in a dispatch to Hastings which declared the Company's willingness "to stand forth as Diwan" and "by the agency of the Company's servants to take upon themselves the entire management of the revenues."[15] Since civil justice and tax collection were closely allied, this step "meant the direct control of the whole civil administration."[16]

The Court order to Hastings was important not only in that it terminated the dual system of government but also because it ended the era of the commercial servant by establishing the rudiments of British civil service in India. For the first time, Englishmen were assigned to districts as collectors and their activities were to be regulated by a Board of Revenue in Calcutta. The Court, however, by providing little in the way of salary increases, better recruiting procedures, or service training, seemed to nullify any possibility for a radically different kind of covenanted servant.

In 1773, Parliament passed the Regulating Acts which helped the Company avert bankruptcy.[17] Hastings became governor-general and a council was formed to assist him. In terms of British history, the Acts fused a long-needed administrative reform with a beneficial gesture to the Indian masses. In the light of subsequent Bengali social and cultural history, the change of regime was crucial because, as a result, Calcutta became the capital of British India. From "a straggling village of mud-houses" in 1771, with "the whole of the ground south of Chandpal Ghat thickly covered with jungle and forest trees,"[18] Calcutta gradually evolved into an appropriate

[14] *Oxford History of India*, ed. P. Spear (third edition; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. 502–503.
[15] *Memoirs of Hastings*, I, 214.
[16] Spear, *Oxford History*, p. 502.
[17] *Memoirs of Hastings*, I, 204.
[18] De, p. 42.

urban setting for expanding the channels of constructive influences from the West and for establishing new organizations offering greater opportunities for intellectual exchange between the two cultures.

In a political position without precedent, in a region impoverished by famine, and beset with factional conflicts that arose out of structural weaknesses of the Parliamentary plan,[19] Hastings seemed to face a hopeless situation. In almost every undertaking, his ideals clashed with harsh circumstance. His dilemma was not that he lacked the talent for producing the appropriate solution for the immediate problem, but that he had so little to work with in realizing his objectives.

This was particularly true of Hastings's notion of a British civil-service elite in India, to which he gave high priority during his administration. Himself proficient in South Asian languages, he saw a direct correlation between an acculturated civil servant and an efficient one.[20] As Spear has pointed out, he sought "to understand Indian culture as a basis for sound Indian administration."[21] The Company and Parliamentary mandate for administrative responsibility in India had been vaguely worded and could be interpreted in either of two ways by the governor-general. He might choose a "Westernizing" approach (as Cornwallis later did) and thus impose alien institutions on Indian soil.[22] Or he might opt, as did Hastings, who "came nearer to the heart of India than any of the other pre-Mutiny rulers,"[23] to work within the existing indigenous institutions.

Because of Hastings's background and inclinations, he was predisposed toward a new cultural policy in which he aimed at creating an Orientalized service elite competent in Indian languages and responsive to Indian traditions. Indianization should be conducted thenceforth not only on the level of social intercourse but also on that of intellectual exchange.[24] Inasmuch as the British servant was expected to work alongside his Asian counterpart in

[19] For example, decisions were made in the governor-general's council by majority vote. During the first two years, Hastings was often outvoted on crucial issues. See *Memoirs of Hastings*, I, 215.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 380.

[21] Spear, *Oxford History*, p. 513.

[22] For an interesting analysis of the attempt by Cornwallis to impose "a Western type of law system" upon Indian soil, see Stokes, pp. 3–7.

[23] Spear, *Oxford History*, p. 513.

[24] Davies, pp. 340–341.

the administrative hierarchy, the Englishman would have to learn to think and act like an Asian. Otherwise, the British would be treated as aliens, rapport between ruler and ruled would break down, and the empire would ultimately collapse.[25] In 1784, with the idea of an Asiatic Society in mind, Hastings wrote:

> Every accumulation of knowledge, and especially such as is obtained by social communication with people over whom we exercise a dominion founded on the right of conquest, is useful to the state: it is the gain of humanity. . . .[26]

When he took office, Hastings found himself saddled with Company agents of the same type as those who had served under Clive. As Thompson and Garrett have reported, "Hastings's letters to individual Directors glowed with indignation at the arrogance and general incompetence of the servants in the field."[27] Since he could do little with the raw material he had, Hastings tried to do the next-best thing. In 1773, he drafted a proposal for the establishment of a professorship of the Persian language at Oxford University.[28] He urged that civil servants study Persian and possibly Hindustani (Urdu) there before coming to India. In 1773 Persian was important—as it would be throughout the first half of the nineteenth century—because it was the language of diplomacy, administration, and the courts of law. At that time Hindustani was the lingua franca of India. Not until 1790, however, did the Company authorize official action toward providing linguistic training.[29]

Hastings solved the problem of language training[30] by developing

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[26] Letter of Hastings to N. Smith, October 4, 1784, quoted in S. K. Dās, *Bāmla gadyasāhityer itihās* (Kalikātā: Mitralay, 1963), p. 52.

[27] Garrett and Thompson, p. 119.

[28] *Home Miscellaneous Series*, CCCCLXXXVII, 213–215, cited by B. B. Misra, *The Central Administratoin of the East India Company* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 383.

[29] In that year, Cornwallis provided each man holding the title of writer (the lowest rank in the Company service) with an extra 30 rupees a month to engage a *munshi* (tutor) who was to teach him Persian. See *ibid.*

[30] In 1801, when Hastings's idea was developed and formalized in a new civil-service training institution known as the College of Fort William, Hastings wrote: "About thirty-five years ago, I drew up a proposal for the establishment of a professorship of the Persian language in the University of Oxford, and presented printed copies of it to all the gentlemen who had at that time the direction of Company affairs. It had the approbation of the Noble Lord who was the Chancellor of the University, and the late Dr.

a coterie of selected aides whom he personally inspired with a love for Asian literature. He turned to the younger men recently arrived in India.[31] Among the earliest were Charles Wilkins, who came to Bengal in 1770, and Nathaniel Halhed and Jonathan Duncan, who both began their tour of duty in 1772. William Jones, the most famous of the new Orientalists, did not arrive until a decade later, in 1783.

In order to meet the urgent need of translating Hindu and Muslim laws into English for the use of the average Company representative, and to translate Company regulations into the languages of the Indian people, Hastings was compelled to accelerate the process of learning and transformation. To stimulate the self-study of languages he instituted financial inducements for those able to translate them.[32]

The implementation of Hastings's policy in the growing cosmopolitan center of Calcutta contributed enormously to the awakening of the Bengali mind.[33] Since Bengal was the immediate cultural frame of reference for that policy's realization, the Bengali lan-

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Johnson promised, if it took place, to frame a code of regulations for the conduct of it. It met with no other encouragement, and was therefore dropped." *Home Miscellaneous Series*, CCCCLXXXVII, 193–207, quoted in Davies, p. 449.

[31] According to Gleig, even as early as 1773, when Hastings set up his first committee of revenue, the governor-general decided "to appoint to this duty not the senior servants of the Company, but such as, by the knowledge of the Persian and Hindostanee languages, and the other qualifications of temper and talent, should appear best fitted to execute the trust." See *Memoirs of Hastings*, I, p. 380. These linguistically competent men were sent out to rural areas or towns of inspection.

[32] William Chambers, Interpreter to the Supreme Court, translated Impey's Code into Persian in 1783 for 2,000 rupees a month, and when the job was finished he had accumulated 32,000 for it. See Narain, p. 14. Jonathan Duncan, who translated the same Code into Bengali also in 1783, received 15,000 rupees. See *ibid.* This patronage continued into the Cornwallis era. In 1788, for example, when William Jones prevailed upon Cornwallis to play Justinian and patronize an English translation of Manu's Code, the government was so liberal in its expenditure as to pay Jones's chief pundit, Tarkapanchanan, 3,600 rupees a year for his services. See B. Banerji, *Dawn of New India* (Calcutta: M. C. Sarkar and Sons, 1927), p. 77.

[33] Hastings was apparently aware of the impact that his new cultural policy would have on Calcutta. In 1773, he already envisioned "Calcutta as . . . the first city in Asia . . . if I live and am supported a few years longer." Letter of Hastings to M. Sykes, March 2, 1773, *Memoirs of Hastings*, I, 285.

guage became the first Sanskritic-derived vernacular to be studied systematically by Englishmen. In 1788, Nathaniel Halhed, one of Hastings's bright young men, published a *Grammar of the Bengali Language* which the esteemed scholar of Bengal, S. K. De, considers "one of the earliest and for some time the best introduction to the scientific study of the language."[34] Though intended for the use of other civil servants, Halhed's meticulous method of extracting the "authentic" language from Muslim and Portuguese influences not only inspired William Carey in the same endeavor but led directly to a renaissance in Bengali language and literature.[35]

Secondly, Hastings's need to reproduce official documents in Oriental script promoted the rise of printing and publishing in Calcutta. Charles Wilkins, another of Hastings's favorites, and nephew of the English printer and engraver Robert B. Wray,[36] applied himself to the task in the 1770's. By 1778, he had completed a set of Bengali types and established the first vernacular printing press in India.[37] That same year Wilkins published Halhed's *Grammar* as the pioneering work printed in Bengali. In 1779, Hastings channeled all official documents in Asian languages through Wilkins' establishment, now a government press.[38] A year later, Wilkins published *Hickey's Gazette*, the first English newspaper in India.[39]

Increasingly, Britishers in South Asia acquired a curiosity about the whole range and substance of what has since been called Indian civilization. By 1784, when Hastings founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal,[40] his vision of an acculturated service elite had been partially realized. This transformation played a major role in reshaping the self-image of later civil servants by making them increasingly conscious of their professional and public responsibilities.

In perspective, the fact that British Orientalism in India can trace its original source of inspiration to Warren Hastings is of outstanding importance. Behind the expediencies of his policy lay a fund of understanding of and benevolence toward the Indian

[34] De, p. 72.

[35] *Infra*, pp. 92–93, 218–219.

[36] Das, pp. 47–48.

[37] S. K. Chatterji, "Symposia on William Jones," *Sir William Jones Commemoration Volume: 1746–1946* (Calcutta: Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1948), p. 92.

[38] Das, p. 31.

[39] "First Establishment of a Press in Calcutta," *Friend of India*, IX (February 26, 1835), 65.

[40] *Infra*, pp 31, 34.

masses. This is not to imply that Hastings was a saint. In his relations with Indian potentates, Hastings was not above using Machiavellian means to extend British power and influence on the subcontinent. Nonetheless, it is still true of Hastings, as Thompson and Garrett have pointed out, that "he loved the people of India, and respected them to a degree no other British ruler has ever equalled."[41] According to Spear, "his name became a legend, passing into popular folklore, his exploits celebrated in popular verse."[42] Hastings sought to instill his feeling for India into the new class of Company officials. His basic convictions became the credo of the Orientalist movement: to rule effectively, one must love India; to love India, one must communicate with her people; and to communicate with her people, one must learn her languages.[43]

[41] Garratt and Thompson, p. 124.

[42] Spear, *Oxford History*, p. 513.

[43] As Gleig aptly points out, the Orientalist credo really represented the reverse side of a new philosophy of cultural encounter. In his cultural policy, Hastings aimed not only at producing an acculturated class of English civil servants, but at providing the means by which Indians might revitalize their own culture. Gleig writes: "He encouraged bodies of learned pundits to settle in Calcutta, and supported them while they translated out of the Sanskrit into more acceptable dialects, the poems and mythological and moral treatises of their native land. He founded colleges for the instruction of native youths in the laws and usages of their own country. He held out inducements to the study by the natives of English literature and English science. He laboured, in short, to promote not only the political, but the moral and rational improvement of the provinces. . . ." *Memoirs of Hastings*, III, 156–157.

II

The Orientalist in Search of a Golden Age

If the new elite of Company servants owed to Warren Hastings their transformation in India from commercial adventurer to civil servant, the basis of their thought and scholarship was the set of values, attitudes, beliefs, and ideas of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Most of them brought with them to Calcutta the conceptual baggage of the *philosophe*. In one sense, therefore, the remarkable historical breakthroughs of such men as William Jones and Henry Colebrooke are reminiscent of those of Gibbon and Voltaire—for all of them were products of the eighteenth-century world of ideas.

To appreciate fully the phenomenal Orientalist rediscovery of the Hindu classical age, it is necessary to isolate those components of the European Enlightenment that predisposed the Company servants in that direction. The intellectual elite that clustered about Hastings after 1770 was classicist rather than "progressive" in their historical outlook, cosmopolitan rather than nationalist in their view of other cultures, and rationalist rather than romantic in their quest for those "constant and universal principles" that express the unity of human nature.[1] What made them an especially fertile field for Hastings's experiments in cultural interaction was the idea of tolerance, the mainspring of their historical and cultural relativism.

In one of his essays on the French Enlightenment in *The Party*

[1] C. L. Becker, *The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), p. 103.

of Humanity, Peter Gay characterized Voltaire as a "subversive anthropologist."[2] "Voltaire was a real cosmopolitan," Gay concludes, "fond of England, impressed with China, attached to pagan Greece and Rome."[3] This view of Voltaire as representative of an age that combined an outgoing universalism with an appreciation for particularist diversity suggests a similar critical concept of twentieth-century scholarship.[4] In the following passage from the *Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations*, Voltaire's "anthropological" attitude is very apparent:

> It follows from this survey of history that everything which pertains intimately to human nature is much the same from one end of the world to the other; that everything which depends on custom is different, and it is mere chance if there is any resemblance. The empire of custom is indeed much larger than that of nature. It extends over manners, over all usage; it spreads variety over the universal scene. Nature spreads unity; it establishes everywhere a small number of invariable principles: thus the foundation is everywhere the same, and culture produces diverse fruits.[5]

This concept of unity and diversity, of process and pattern, viewed in historical perspective was perhaps one of the most significant ideas to emerge in the eighteenth-century philosophy of history.[6] The belief that man, though culturally different, is basically the same everywhere enabled Voltaire, as Ferguson asserts, "to pave the way for a history of civilizations."[7]

Voltaire and his contemporaries paved the way for a proper study of historical civilization, and they also felt a deep and lively

[2] P. Gay, "The Subversive Anthropologist," *The Party of Humanity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 50.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] The reference here is specifically to the cultural and historical relativity found in Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict among anthropologists and Arnold Toynbee among historians (especially the first volume in the latter's *Study of History*). See also the foreword to L. Woolley, *The Beginnings of Civilization*, UNESCO History of Mankind (New York: New American Library, 1965), I, v–xl.

[5] Quoted in W. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1948), pp. 81–82.

[6] In Ferguson's view, the importance lay in Voltaire's ability to "recognize the peculiar and varying spirit of nations or of ages, while still denying that these differences are essential or inherent in the nature of men of different times or different races." See *ibid.*, p. 82.

[7] *Ibid.*

interest in its classical form. "Whoever thinks, or whoever possesses taste," wrote Voltaire, "only counts four centuries in the history of the world."[8] The four ages were all classical or neoclassical: Greece, Augustan Rome, Renaissance Italy, and the age of Louis XIV.[9] To the men of the Enlightenment, therefore, the history of civilizations did not show uninterrupted progress toward Utopia, but was, on the contrary, cyclical in its discontinuous movements from greatness to decline.

Hence, what permeates Gibbon's masterpiece of eighteenth-century classicism, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, is a kind of Greek sense of tragedy. Written between 1776 and 1788, it not only represented the cyclical interpretation of history but also expressed a profound identification with a remote age of antiquity. For Gibbon, the decline of the classical world was not so much a cause of jubilation as it was sufficient reason for despair. Referring to Gibbon's philosophy of history, Christopher Dawson has aptly pointed out: "Every man and every state have their hour, and though genius and virtue could realize the possibilities of that happy moment, they could not preserve it or make the wheel of fortune to stand still."[10]

This mood of despair has provided since Petrarch the proper emotional receptiveness for a concept of dark ages.[11] The ages of gold and the ages of darkness seem so closely interrelated that it is difficult to know whether—in the case of many European renaissance historians—those historians are exuberantly optimistic about the rebirth of the classical world in Italy or deeply fascinated by the decline of antiquity.

Cosmopolitanism, classicism, and rationalism were distinguishing features of the enlightened eighteenth-century mind, but it was

[8] "Age of Louis XIV," *The Works of Voltaire*, trans. W. Fleming (New York: St. Hubert Guild, 1901), XII, 5.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 5–8.

[10] C. Dawson, "Edward Gibbon and the Fall of Rome," *The Dynamics of World History* (New York: New American Library, 1962), p. 338.

[11] According to Ferguson: "With Petrarch the division between ancient and later history took on a new meaning, founded on romantic admiration for pagan Roman literature, the city of Rome, and ideal of republican virtue. . . . Defining his terms, he called the period, prior to adoption of Christianity . . . ancient (*antiqua*) . . . his own age modern (*nova*). And this modern age he qualified consistently as one of barbarism and darkness (*tenebrae*). Petrarch, indeed, may well be regarded as the originator of the conception of the 'dark ages.'" Ferguson, p. 8.

the idea of tolerance that proved crucial to British Orientalists seeking to transcend alienation from another culture. The high intellectual regard for non-European peoples and cultures (even primitive ones) was presumably as prevalent in the 1700's as it was to become rare in the 1800's. In sharp contrast with the age of Kipling, the Age of Enlightenment believed, as Carl Becker tells us, "That far the greater part of mankind, during far the greater period of recorded history, had lived (except indeed, when oppressed and corrupted by Christian powers) more happily and humanely, under laws and customs more free and equitable, more in accord with natural religion and morality, than the peoples of Europe had done during the centuries of ecclesiastical ascendency. . . ."[12]

It may be said that the *philosophes*' spirit of tolerance reached out to all but those guilty of intolerance. This seems to be Gay's explanation for Voltaire's low level of patience for Catholicism and its legacy of medieval "barbarism," with its "despicable faith steeped in superstition and stained with persecution."[13] His high evaluation of Chinese mandarins, on the other hand, was due to "their admirable religion free from superstitions and the rage to persecute."[14]

Both intolerance for the intolerant and a positive sympathy and appreciation for the histories of other cultures were regularly invoked "in the service of reason and common sense."[15] In Gibbon's work, for example, the iconographical ritualism of medieval Catholicism was compared unfavorably with the puritanical simplicity of the Muslim faith. The special quality of the period that enabled historian-philosophers like Gibbon to combine a critical attitude toward one's own culture with an admiration for the virtues of another contributed to the birth of comparative history. In fact, this capacity for viewing history and culture relativistically, which is the key to understanding British Orientalist historiography, was strongly characteristic of Gibbon's thought. The fol-

[12] Becker, pp. 107–108.

[13] Gay, p. 50.

[14] Voltaire's admiration of the Chinese was very strong. In one passage, he wrote: "Never was the religion . . . and of the tribunals dishonoured with impostures; never was it troubled with quarrels between the priests and the empire; never was it burdened with absurd innovations. Here the Chinese were superior to all the nations of the universe." Voltaire, "The Philosophy of History," *Best Known Works* (New York: The Book League, 1940), p. 400.

[15] Becker, p. 108.

lowing passage from *The Decline and Fall* could only have been written by an Orientalist: "More pure than the system of Zoroaster, more liberal than the law of Moses, the religion of Mahomet might seem less inconsistent with reason than the creed of mystery and superstition which in the seventh century disgraced the simplicity of the Gospel."[16]

It seems evident, therefore, why many of the Company recruits who went to India were predisposed to adopt the basic tenets of Hastings's Orientalism. This is not to argue that they were necessarily influenced by European thought or that Orientalism was simply an intellectual extension of the West on Indian soil. At the other extreme, to argue that civil servants became Orientalists wholly as a result of their Indian experience, or that Orientalism was derived only from conditions of European rule in Asia, is to give too shallow an explanation for too complex a phenomenon.

It appears, rather, that the European climate of thought and opinion favored an Orientalist movement in Asia. Judging from the Dutch experience in Indonesia, such a movement was not inevitable.[17] On the other hand, later in the nineteenth century in England, when cosmopolitanism became less fashionable than nationalism and when tolerance for other peoples gave way to the intolerance of national self-adulation, the fitting atmosphere for an Orientalist movement or for a Warren Hastings himself largely disappeared.

The earliest Hastings-trained generation of officials was born between 1740 and 1765. As was customary in Company recruiting procedures, every man was originally sponsored by a relative or friend of the family.[18] In many instances it was because of their

[16] E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York: Modern Library, 1932), III, 204–205.

[17] It would be interesting to speculate on what might have happened if the British had kept Indonesia. T. S. Raffles, who served as governor-general of Java between 1811 and 1816, was an Orientalized civil servant "imbued with the principles of the Enlightenment." See W. Bingham, *et al.*, *A History of Asia* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1965), II, 177. Raffles studied the language of Java and wrote a classic history of the island. See T. S. Raffles, *History of Java* (London: John Murray and Company, 1830). Raffles also ordered the first survey to be made of the magnificent Borobodur monument.

[18] For more information, see L. S. S. O'Malley, "Selection and Training," *The Indian Civil Service, 1601–1930* (London: John Murray, 1931), pp. 229–239.

impecunious circumstances and their desire to accumulate wealth rapidly that the men were prompted to apply. The majority of them began their ascent of the Company ladder in either commercial or revenue offices,[19] and in true Horatio Alger fashion worked their way up through initiative and hard work.

The key to advancement, in most cases, was linguistic proficiency: Charles Grant, who moved from the post of resident in Malda to the Board of Trade in Calcutta, and on to greater heights in London, was an outstanding exception. When he met William Jones in 1785, the "variety and depth of learning" of the Orientalist filled Grant with the "shame of being unlearned."[20] Grant's was a special kind of transformation. After the death of his two children from smallpox in 1776,[21] Grant became deeply religious, and this attitude apparently served the same end for him as did the Orientalist commitment for other company employees.

In the era of Hastings, and for some time thereafter, the mastery of Indian languages opened the way to both professional advancement and the literary treasures of an Oriental civilization. Charles Wilkins, for example, who like Grant served in Malda and was at first unresponsive to the study of languages, suddenly applied himself to mastering Sanskrit.[22] Wilkins's proficiency in the classical language of the Hindus not only endeared him to Hastings—who invited him to Calcutta[23]—but also led to a major scholarly conversion. The same Wilkins who managed the first government press in Calcutta also translated the *Bhagavat Gita* in 1783, pioneered in the use of inscriptions to reconstruct the history of the Palas of Bengal,[24] and was one of the charter members of the Royal Asiatic Society. His reputation as a "Sanskritist" earned him a D.C.L. from Oxford in 1805 and a knighthood in 1833.

Not all conversions conformed so neatly to this pattern. Henry

[19] Spear, *Oxford History*, p. 527.

[20] A. Embree, *Charles Grant and British Rule in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), p. 149.

[21] H. Morris, *Charles Grant* (London: Christian Literary Society, 1879), p. 4.

[22] De, p. 73.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

[24] C. Wilkins, "A Royal Grant of Land, Engraved on a Copper Plate," *Asiatick Researches*, I (1788), 123–128. For its significance, see A. F. R. Hoernle, "Archeology, History, Literature," *Centenary Review of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, comp. R. Mitra (Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1885), Part II, p. 2.

T. Colebrooke—who was destined to be, next to Jones, the greatest of the Orientalists—prided himself at first on having resisted the temptation to join the translation game. "Translations," he wrote, "are for those who need to fill their purses."[25] According to A. J. Arberry, not only did Colebrooke ridicule the Hastings policy, but he spoke disparagingly of such Orientalists as Wilkins as "Sanskrit-mad" and described their early publications as "a repository of nonsense."[26]

Colebrooke first came to India at the age of eighteen in 1783 as a writer in Madras. In the manner of Gibbon and like many of the more intellectually gifted men in Company service, he experienced an "intoxicating" love for the classical civilization of Greece and Rome.[27] In fact, Colebrooke was the type of eighteenth-century man who would prove most receptive to the Hastings ideal and was most likely to succeed as an Orientalist. In Madras, the youthful Colebrooke gained a reputation for eschewing both drinking and gambling and was concerned as little with illicit profiteering as he was in accumulating debts in order to keep up appearances.[28] Instead, he spent long hours in his room studying the European classics.

The change in Colebrooke may well have been caused by the sudden depletion of the family fortune, which made a career in England impossible for him.[29] When he turned finally to the study of Sanskrit, it was with the same sobriety and thoroughness that he had applied to the study of the classics and that were, as his German admirer, Max Müller has written, "the distinguishing features" of his later accomplishments.[30] Colebrooke's subsequent service near the holy city of Benares afforded him an unusual opportunity to study at first hand the Sanskrit language and Sanskritic culture.

By 1794, his scholarly reputation in India was so generally acknowledged that he was chosen the logical successor to William Jones, who had died earlier that year. The scholarly reputation that Colebrooke continually reinforced by original research and brilliant articles not only won him laurels in Europe but contributed

[25] Colebrooke letter, n.d., quoted in F. M. Müller, *Biographical Essays* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1884), p. 233.

[26] A. J. Arberry, *British Orientalists* (London: William Collins and Company, 1943), p. 32.

[27] Müller, p. 233.

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 232.

directly to his later career in Calcutta (1800–15), where he served in the highest offices of the state.[31]

If officials such as Colebrooke, Wilkins, and Jones developed into great scholars as a result of the new Hastings spirit, it must be added that most of the other Orientalists proved mediocre scholars but outstanding civil servants. The pioneering achievements of a few men and the erudite aura of the Asiatic Society of Bengal have contributed to the mistaken impression that British Orientalism was made up of professorial individuals who spent most of their time on research and publication.

Jonathan Duncan, for example—for whom, unlike Colebrooke, no German ever thought of erecting a statue[32]—nevertheless was closer to the Hastings ideal of a civil servant than perhaps any one else in his generation. Though he was an able translator of Bengali and Persian and author of scholarly articles in the *Asiatick Researches*,[33] his bent was far more administrative than intellectual. Like Charles Metcalfe in the next generation,[34] he expressed his Orientalist love and knowledge of India in programs of social improvement that were relevant to urgent popular needs.

Duncan's career in India, 1772–1811, almost perfectly typifies that of the transformed civil servant. The Hastings policy opened up the attractive alternative of a noncommercial public-service career, and Duncan grasped the opportunity. The stages in his development are familiar: linguistic proficiency, translation of official documents, close relationships with the Hindu literati, exploration of and an ever-deepening appreciation for Hinduism, and charter member of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Professionally, Duncan ran the gamut of elitist positions in the administration. From a writership and a minor judicial position, he worked his way up through the ranks of the Revenue Department.[35] He was one of three or four key aides whom Cornwallis

[31] Most important among his post–1800 positions in Calcutta were as mem- of the Supreme Council (1807) and Supreme Court Judge (1813).

[32] Wrote Max Müller: "Had he lived in Germany, we should long ago have seen his statue in his native place, his name written in letters of gold on the walls of academies; we should have heard of Colebrooke jubilees and Colebrooke scholarships. . . ." Müller, p. 230.

[33] His most important article—because it led to the discovery of Sarnath as a Buddhist center—was, according to R. C. Mitra: "Discovery of Two Urns in the Vicinity of Benares," *Asiatick Researches* (1797), V, 131–133.

[34] *Infra*, pp. 106–107.

[35] Narain, p. 9.

inherited from Hastings and whom he greatly depended upon throughout his tenure of office.[36] Duncan served Cornwallis as Persian interpreter, Secretary of the Public and Revenue Departments, Resident of Benares and Commissioner of Territories Ceded by Tipu Sultan. In 1795 he was appointed Governor of Bombay, a post he held until his death in 1811.

Duncan always coupled his duty to the Company with his responsibility to the people under his jurisdiction. In 1789, he took steps to abolish infanticide among the Rajkumars, a local grouping of Rajputs. As Resident of Benares, he might have legislated the evil out of existence. Instead, he met with the chiefs and discussed with them from various standpoints the deliberate starvation of their children. He pointed out that, for example, this practice contravened the dictates of the Hindu scriptures. Knowing that female children were an economic drain on many families, he offered government compensation if the Rajputs would agree to end the practice. In June of that year, the Rajkumars, apparently without coercion on the part of the government, complied with Duncan's wishes and put an end to infanticide.[37]

In the Hastings manner, Duncan followed a consistent policy of encouraging the revitalization of Hindu learning and philosophy. While still at Benares, he proposed to his superiors in 1791 that a "Hindu College" be established "for the preservation and cultivation of the Laws, Literature and Religion of that Nation at this Centre of their Faith."[38] In support of his proposal, Duncan pointed out that this institution, unlike the many smaller seminaries in Benares, would be a "public university" offering the Hindus a totally new concept of research and education. It would be both a center for correcting existing texts and a "precious library of the most ancient and valuable learning and tradition." Finally it would prove "a Nursery of future Doctors and Expounders of the Law to assist European Judges in . . . regular and uniform administration. . . ."[39]

While Duncan typified the ideal Orientalized civil servant and Colebrooke was one of the finest Oriental scholars produced in the same milieu, many of the Company employees who lacked the integrity of the one and the intellect of the other achieved a com-

[36] Charles Grant and George Barlow were the other two.

[37] For additional information on this and other similar episodes, see Narain.

[38] Duncan quoted in *ibid.*, p. 169.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 171.

promise between the values of the Clive generation and those of the new administration. At the same time that Duncan won approval for the first Sanskrit university to be established in British India, another Scotsman, destined for Orientalist fame as a scholar of Hindustani language and literature, was engaged in some shady indigo operations in the vicinity of Benares.

This Scotsman, John B. Gilchrist, represented a group of Company-recruited surgeons who subsequently established favorable reputations for themselves as skilled linguists. William Hunter, John Leyden, and H. H. Wilson also arrived in India as doctors and left as reputed philologists. Gilchrist was a shrewd man who seems to have turned to translation work as a means of augmenting his income after other means had failed. We first find him in Benares in 1787 buying land illegally for the cultivation of indigo.[40] In 1793 Gilchrist had actually organized an army which went into combat against other Europeans also hoping to cultivate indigo in the same area.[41] A year later he came to Calcutta and must have observed the opportunities beginning to open for anyone who was proficient in the Urdu language.

Whatever their intent upon arriving in India, whatever their motivation in mastering Indian languages and then translating them for profit, the first generation of Orientalists left India with a tradition of public service and cultural empathy which for the most part was lacking in the generation they replaced (see Table 1). More important, perhaps, the Hastings-inspired amateur scholars brought into being a new concept of the Hindu golden age as a legacy for the rising Indian intelligentsia.

The combination of a transplanted elite transformed on Indian soil and their eighteenth-century background helps to explain both the institutional genesis of the Asiatic Society and the nature of its intellectual values. The Asiatic Society was not properly the conception of any one man, be it Hastings or Jones, but the expression of a collective need. After a decade of studying facets of Hindu and Muslim civilization in India, the Hastings generation now required a more formal organization.

The Asiatic Society of Bengal was, until the nineteenth century, an association for an elite of Company officials in the Calcutta area meeting irregularly either in the Supreme Court building or in

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 98.
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

Table 1

THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS UNDER HASTINGS, 1770–1785

Name	*Birth*	*Class*	*European Education*	*Arrived in India*	*Language Mastered*	*Elitist Post*	*Principal Orientalist Activities*
Chambers, Robert	1737	Aristocrat	Harrow, Oxford	1774	Persian	Supreme Court Judge	Translator; Asiatic Society
Colebrooke, Henry	1765	Banker's son	Secondary; classical	1783	Sanskrit	Supreme Council	Scholar; translator; Asiatic Society
Duncan, Jonathan	1756	Company director's son	Secondary	1772	Persian, Bengali, Sanskrit	Resident, Benares	Social reformer; scholar; Asiatic Society
Edmunstone, Niel B.	1765	Aristocrat	Oxford	1783	Persian, Bengali	Persian Secretary	Translator; Asiatic Society
Forster, Henry P.	1760	Aristocrat	Oxford (?)	1783	Bengali	Calcutta Mint	First modern Bengali dictionary
Gilchrist, John B.	1759	?	Heriot's Hospital, Edinburgh	?	Urdu	Professor, College of Fort William	Translator; Urdu grammar and dictionary; Asiatic Society
Halhed, Nathaniel B.	1751	Aristocrat	Harrow, Oxford	1772	Bengali, Sanskrit, Persian	Supreme Court Judge	First modern Bengali grammar
Hunter, William	1755	(?)	Aberdeen, Marishal College	1781	Urdu	Professor, librarian, College of F.W.	Translator; Asiatic Society

Name	*Birth*	*Class*	*European Education*	*Arrived In India*	*Language Mastered* •	*Elitist Post*	*Principal Orientalist Activities*
Jones, William	1746	Aristocrat	Harrow, Oxford	1783	Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic	Supreme Court Judge	Translator; Asiatic Society; reformer; scholar
Wilkins, Charles	1750	Upper middle class	?	1770	Persian, Sanskrit, Bengali	Director, Company Press, Calcutta	Translator; scholar; Asiatic Society

SOURCE: Compiled principally from *A General Register of the Hon'ble East India Company's Civil Servants of the Bengal Establishment*, comp. H. T. Prinsep (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1844).

private homes.[42] Though the general membership had been well over 100 since 1790,[43] the active core of members attending meetings was rather naturally limited to a small group of administrative and judicial figures stationed in Calcutta.[44]

Apparently, the original intention of Society members was not so much to publish their findings as to make available English translations of Oriental classics. William Jones, their first president, contemplated the publication of one volume every year in a series to be entitled "Asiatick Miscellany."[45] Unfortunately, lack of funds compelled him to abandon the scheme and instead he sought a publisher for the papers read at each meeting. In 1788, Manuel Cantopher agreed to publish the papers—on the condition that every Society member promise to buy each volume at 20 rupees per copy.[46] The resulting journal, *Asiatick Researches*, was eagerly read by European scholars, who welcomed the first fruits of original research in India. Five volumes of the *Researches* were published by 1797 and one pirated edition appeared in Europe in 1798.[47] (See Table 2.)

For William Jones, the most outstanding intellect in the Asiatic Society until his death in 1794, the decision to subordinate translation work to scholarship proved a turning point in his life. It was not his translation of *Sakuntala*, however well received,[48] that established him as the great seminal figure of the Orientalist movement but rather his varied research, his brilliant analysis, and his broad, deeply suggestive generalizations on Asian antiquity. The papers that he read at Society seminars in the form of discourses were re-written for the edification of European scholars who conscientiously scanned the pages of the *Researches*. So anxious was Jones to integrate every finding into elaborate conceptual schemes

[42] R. Mitra, "History of the Society," *Centenary Review of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, Part I, p. 9.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

[44] In 1799 this clique included Sir John Anstruther, John H. Harington, John Gilchrist, Francis Gladwin, Francis Macnaughten, and William Roxburgh.

[45] Mitra, *Centenary Review*, Part I, p. 47.

[46] *Ibid.*

[47] *Ibid.*

[48] As Jones's biographer, G. Cannon, points out, Kalidasa's rediscovery had its most important impact on Indians: "Now Indians could hold up their heads as civilized, cultured men. The way had been opened for them to regain their literature . . ." G. Cannon, p. 166.

that he reminded Max Müller "of the dashing and impatient general who tries to take every fortress by bombardment and storm."[49]

As soon as Jones reached Calcutta in 1783, he immediately concentrated upon applying his eighteenth-century ideals to an alien environment. His own vision of an Asiatic Society proved to be, as Garland Cannon has aptly pointed out, the crystallization of a new ideology of cultural encounter between Asia and the West. In Cannon's words: If it [the Asiatic Society] could stimulate Europeans to intellectual endeavor in regard to Asian culture, it would not just help prevent their indulgence in vice-ridden cities—a strong temptation against which Benjamin Franklin had warned Jones—but it would be promoting understanding between peoples, a condition necessary for a successful rule of the vast sub-continent.[50]

In contrast to the Orientalism of the nineteenth century with its romanticist view of cultural diversity, the scholarship of Jones was universalist and rationalist. In his first presidential address to the Asiatic Society, Jones clearly stated that his "inquiry into the History, Civil and Natural, the Antiquities, Arts, Sciences and Literature of Asia" was a means to the end of discovering truths about "Man and Nature."[51] Asian knowledge would add a new dimension to our understanding of human learning. Human learning, or knowledge, which was for Jones the true concern of the Asiatic Society, he divided into three parts: "history, Science and Art." In his own words:

> The first [history] comprehends either an account of natural productions, or the genuine records of empires and states; the second [science] embraces the whole circle of pure and mixed mathematics together with ethicks and law, as far as they depend on the reasoning faculty; the third [art] includes all the beauties of imagery and the chorus of invention, displayed in modulated language, or represented by colour, figure or sound.[52]

William Jones was the man who, in 1786, may have been the first seriously to consider that India's golden period as a culture lay in a remote, unchartered period in world history. Moreover, this view was propounded in the very same discourse that outlined

[49] Müller, p. 271.
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 114.
[51] W. Jones, "A Discourse on the Institution of a Society," *Asiatick Researches*, I (1788), ix.
[52] *Ibid.*, p. xii.

Table 2

HISTORICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, 1784–1816

Orientalist	*Branch*	*Primary Research Interest*	*Principal Discovery*	*Major Publication (With Date)*
Colebrook, H. T.	Civil	Vedic age	Monotheism, widow remarriage, etc.	*"On the Vedas," 1805 *"On Hindu Widows," 1795
Davis, S.	Diplomatic	Hindu science	Early algebra, trigonometry	*"On Astronomical Calculations of the Hindus," 1795
Duncan, J.	Civil	History, Benares	Sarnath as Buddhist center	*"Discovery of Two Urns in the Vicinity of Benares," 1797
Gladwin, F.	Military	History, Mughals	Akbar's India from Persian texts	*On Institutes of Akbar, 1783–86*
Harrington, J. H.	Judicial	Buddhism	Early account of Buddhism in Ceylon	*"On Buddhist Stupas in Ceylon," 1799
Jones, W.	Judicial	Sources of Indo-European languages and cultures	Linguistic links between Indo-Europeans	*"Third Annual Discourse," 1788
Mackenzie, C.	Military	History, South India	Collected 1,568 mss. 8,076 inscriptions; wrote earliest accounts of Jains in South India	*"Remarks on Antiquities on West Coast Ceylon," 1799, etc.
Malcolm, J.	Diplomatic	History of West India	Earliest history of the Sikhs	*"Sketch of the Sikhs," 1810

Orientalist	*Branch*	*Primary Research Interest*	*Principal Discovery*	*Major Publication (With Date)*
Strachey, E.	Civil	Mathematics of Hindus	Algebraic and arithmetical knowledge of ancient Hindus; earliest account of transmission of mathematics to Arabs	*"On Early History of Algebra," 1816
Wilford, F.	Military	Historical geography of ancient India	Earliest analysis of geography of ancient India	*"On the Ancient Geography of India," 1815
Wilkins, C.	Civil	Pre-Muslim Bengal	Earliest historical treatment of Pala Dynasty in Bengal based on inscriptional evidence	*"A Royal Grant of Land on a Copper Plate," 1788, etc.

* Asiatick Researches

SOURCE: Compiled principally from *Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, "Manuscript Proceedings" of the Asiatic Society of Bengal Library of the ASB, Calcutta.

his remarkable rediscovery of a common source of the languages of the Indo-European peoples. Both these intellectual achievements were the work of a universalist who sought to explain cultural unity through common origins. In the following oft-quoted passage, Jones gives his reasons for maintaining that Sanskrit was the fountainhead of many languages:

> The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity both in the roots of verbs and in the form of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; . . . there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the Gothick and the Celtick, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the Sanskrit; and the old Persian might be added to the same family. . . .[53]

Indeed, what Jones actually accomplished, and which would have important repercussions in later generations, was that by linking Sanskrit, the language of the ancient Hindus, to the European language family he related Hindu civilization to that of Europe and reanimated the resplendent Hindu past. Jones responded in the same way to Indian philosophy. In contrast to the bias of German scholars who increasingly viewed the *Vedanta* as a unique manifestation of the "Aryan genius," Jones reacted to it by stressing similarities between it and other comparable works of philosophy. It was not possible for him, for example, "to read the Vedanta or the many fine compositions in illustration of it, without believing that Pythagoras and Plato derived their sublime theories from the same fountain with the sages of India."[54]

In the 1786 discourse Jones admitted that, in the absence of authentic historical knowledge, his observations concerning the Indo-European period were impressionistic. His intellectual curiosity was whetted by extant fragments of a civilization which he understood incompletely. Bits and pieces of Sanskrit language and literature, the six schools of Indian philosophy, the Laws of Manu, the religious myths and symbols, and the varied sculptural and architectural remains all testified to a "people with a fertile and inventive genius."[55] But these people had since then substituted

[53] W. Jones, "Third Annual Discourse," *Asiatick Researches*, I (1788), 422–423.
[54] *Ibid.*, p. 425.
[55] *Ibid.*, p. 421.

astrological calculations for a viable chronological scheme and had buried their history in "a cloud of fables."[56] For Jones, one thing seemed certain: ". . . how degenerate and abased so ever the Hindus may now appear, that in some early age they were splendid in arts and arms, happy in government; wise in legislation, and eminent in various knowledge. . . ."[57]

If Jones is to be remembered for those sweeping but nonetheless intuitively correct generalizations which portrayed a grandiose Indo-European world, H. T. Colebrooke should be recalled for his specialized interests and incisive monographic studies on Vedic India. Max Müller, who admired Colebrooke far more than Jones, believed that "few scholars were able to go beyond Colebrooke."[58] Whereas "Sir William explored a few fields," Müller wrote, Colebrooke tackled "the really difficult works, the grammatical treatises and the commentaries, the philosophic systems, and before all, the immense literature of the Vedic period."[59]

In his treatment of universal history, Colebrooke, like Jones, displayed a typical intellect of the eighteenth century. Colebrooke viewed history not as a chronicle of political events but as a record depicting the growth of civilizations. In the tradition of Voltaire, he once said before the Royal Asiatic Society:

> I do not refer merely to the succession of political struggles, national conflicts, and warlike achievements; but rather to less conspicuous, yet more important occurrences, which directly concern the structure of society, the civil institutions of nations. Their internal, more than their external relations, and the yet less prominent, but more momentous events which affect society universally, and advance it in the scale of civilized life.[60]

Colebrooke also expressed the familiar argument of the eighteenth century in behalf of a liberal spirit between cultures. The West, he stated, "owes a debt of gratitude" to the civilizations of Asia for their contributions in the arts and sciences.[61] In fact, "civilization had its origin in Asia."[62] Now, whereas the West was taking large strides forward, Asia was in a state of decline. The

[56] *Ibid.*
[57] *Ibid.*
[58] Müller, p. 262.
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 270.
[60] H. T. Colebrooke, "Discourse at the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland," *Miscellaneous Essays* (London: William H. Allen and Company, 1837), I, 3.
[61] *Ibid.*, pp. 1–2.
[62] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

way to help Asians, the Orientalist Colebrooke recommended, was to "investigate" the history of their cultures "with the hope of facilitating ameliorations of which they may be found susceptible."[63]

Though Colebrooke held out hope for a rebirth of a declining East, his fascination with the rediscovery of a Hindu age of splendor drew him closer and closer to Gibbon's form of classicism. Far more than Jones, Colebrooke concentrated his research upon Vedic India, and by the end of his career, he had devised a new composite image of the Indo-Aryan period as an age of gold. As with Max Müller, who continued Colebrooke's work, each discovery or rediscovery of Vedic India was dramatically and metaphorically contrasted with the peculiarities of contemporary Hindu society. It was Colebrooke, for example, approximately twenty years before Rammohun Roy's first tract on *sati*, who demonstrated from textual sources that the voluntary immolation of widows in Bengal was a departure from the authentic tradition.[64] It was Colebrooke who first sought the historical origins of the Indian caste system and discovered the many discrepancies between ancient textual requirements and actual contemporary practices.[65]

It was not until Colebrooke was brought to Calcutta by Governor-general Wellesley to be professor of Sanskrit at the College of Fort William (1800), that he was able to study the *Vedas* seriously for the first time.[66] He used the college library to piece together the Vedic fragments which had been collected by Jones, Halhed, Martine, and Chambers. He collated their manuscripts with his own (which he had brought from Benares) and five years later published his results in the famous "Essay on the Vedas, or Sacred Writings of the Hindus." Though he never translated the *Vedas*, an arduous task performed by Max Müller fifty years later, he did analyze their general contents, and placed them historically as dating prior to the age of the Puranas.[67]

The significance of Colebrooke's "Essay on the Vedas," especially in the light of the later history of the *Brahmo Samaj*, was his dis-

[63] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

[64] H. T. Colebrooke, "On the Duties of a Faithful Hindu Widow," *Asiatick Researches*, IV (1795), 209–219.

[65] H. T. Colebrooke, "Enumeration of Indian Classes," in *ibid.*, V (1798), 53–67.

[66] *Infra*, pp. 51, 87.

[67] H. T. Colebrooke, "On the Vedas or the Sacred Writings of the Hindus," *Asiatick Researches* (1805) reprinted in *Miscellaneous Essays*, p. 196.

covery of "the unity of the Godhead," or a monotheistic tradition, in ancient India. In an earlier article he had already argued that the existence of polytheism and idolatry in present-day India suggested to him that "modern Hindus seem to misunderstand their numerous texts."[68] In 1805 Colebrooke stated emphatically of the *Vedas* that "Most of what is there taught, is now obsolete; and in its stead new orders of religious devotees have been instituted; and new forms of religious ceremonies have been established. Rituals founded in the Puranas and observances borrowed from a *worse* source, the *Tantras*, have in great measure . . . [replaced] the Vedas."[69]

The Jones-Colebrooke portrayal of the Vedic age to which a Müller would add the finishing touches, and which today is widely accepted, depicted a people believed to have behaved very differently from present-day Hindus. It was the first reconstructed golden age of the Indian renaissance. The new view romanticized the virtues of the Aryan inhabitants of north India in the second millenium B.C. Instead of being introspective and other-worldly, the Aryans were thought to have been outgoing and nonmystical. They were pictured as a robust, beef-eating, socially equalitarian society. Instead of Oriental despotism, scholars discerned tribal republics. There were apparently no laws or customs to compel a widow to commit *sati*. There were no temples, and there was not the slightest evidence to suggest that Aryans concretized idolatrous images of their gods. And to round out the picture, also absent were the fertility goddesses, the evil personification of Kali, and the rites and rituals of later Tantrism.

In the first decade of the 1800's the work of the Orientalists seems to have been well received by the literate English public. The men of the Asiatic Society were not infrequently likened to the Italian humanists. They were regularly praised in the press for their gift of a new renaissance in the East. In one popular poem of the period, Hastings was wreathed as "father of India . . . saviour of the East,"[70] and on Wilkins was bestowed the double distinction of "Sanskritist" and the patient scholar "who gave to Asia typographic art."[71]

[68] H. T. Colebrooke, "On the Religious Ceremonies of the Hindus," *Miscellaneous Essays*, p. 196.

[69] Colebrooke, "On the Vedas," p. 111.

[70] J. Collegins, "Literary Characteristics of the Most Distinguished Members of the Asiatic Society," *Asiatic Annual Register* (London: J. Debett, 1801), p. 118.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 115.

Jones was accorded the greatest honor of all: he was credited with restoring India to her rightful place among the civilizations of the world by rediscovering her golden age of arts and letters.

In the roster of Bengal-renaissance giants appeared the name of a man who was being lauded as Hastings's worthy successor. Lord Wellesley, then governor-general of India, was hailed as the Medici-like patron of the Eastern revival. In a poem by John Collegins, Wellesley was described as deserving of the laurel crown of the famed family of Italian merchant-princes, and Calcutta, the seat of British influence on the subcontinent, was portrayed as becoming the Florence of Asia.[72]

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 113.

PART II

The Establishment of an Orientalist Training Center 1800-1805

By its employment of the Press, by pecuniary and other encouragement, by affording a central place for the needed contact of mind to mind, [the College of Fort William] gave such an impetus to Bengali learning, as was never given by any other institution since the establishment of British rule.

—SUSHIL KUMAR DE

III

Wellesley's "Oxford of the East"

When Marquess Wellesley was named governor-general in 1798, he was thirty-seven years of age, a small man with a strong sense of mission and also a profound knowledge and love of the classics, particularly the Roman ones. Years later, after having built the now-famous Government House in Calcutta, he would sit in a room plotting moves and countermoves against his opponents, both military and political, while surrounded by marble busts of the twelve Caesars.[1] An aristocrat by birth, he remained loyal to his class. He dedicated himself, as did his brother, the future Duke of Wellington, to fight against what they considered the pernicious ideas of the French Revolution.

When Wellesley prepared to set sail for India in 1797 the war was going so badly against England that it had lost its only ally, Austria, after Campo Formio; had abandoned the Mediterranean when faced with a combined Dutch, French, and Spanish fleet; and was almost invaded by a French expeditionary force operating in concert with Irish insurgents.[2] It is therefore understandable why Wellesley, upon arriving in Calcutta, was determined not only to crush French military influence in India but also to suppress any subversive radical thought he found there. He sought to stop the flow of alien ideas into India and his censorship of the Calcutta

[1] C. Newton, *Calcutta Landmarks* (Calcutta: Amrita Bazar Patrika, n.d.), p. 6.

[2] L. Gershoy, *The French Revolution and Napoleon* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1933), p. 328.

press was absolute.[3] Nonofficial Europeans were particularly unwelcome during Wellesley's administration and were often suspected of being French spies or propagandists.[4]

During 1798, the Calcutta press carried articles and reprinted threatening letters by Napoleon relating to the expected Egyptian conquest and his ambitious desire to link up with sovereign Indian states.[5] On June 18 and November 26, 1798, the Secret Committee sent the governor-general dispatches warning him about Napoleon and advising him to "be on guard."[6] A letter from the Court of Directors to Wellesley also dated November 26 reported that Napoleon had seized Egypt.[7] In 1799, Dundas and other court officials were so frightened by the success of the French army in the Middle East that they urged Wellesley to give serious consideration to attacking Egypt from India.[8]

By the time Wellesley was finally recalled from India (1805), a political revolution had occurred there in which the extent of British expansion on the subcontinent, through actual territorial acquisition or by means of subsidiary alliances, was so vast and expensive as to stagger the imagination of his contemporaries.[9] Less known is the fact that Wellesley was also responsible for a cultural revolution in India no less significant than the political one. That revolution was principally effected by the activities of the College of Fort William, which he created. In both cases, a root cause of Wellesley's actions was, by his own admission, his fear

[3] *All-India Exhibition: Newspapers and Periodicals Court*, ed. A. Home (Calcutta: P. B. Roy, 1948), p. 12.

[4] In October, 1799, when British Baptist missionaries were preparing to disembark at Calcutta, Wellesley was convinced that they were really radicals in disguise and ordered the ship's captain, an American, to surrender them to the local police. The captain's refusal and the Danish governor's offer of protection at Serampore saved them from imprisonment, deportation, or even death. For more details, see J. C. Marshman, *Life and Times of Carey, Marshman and Ward* (London: Brown, Green, Longmans and Roberts, 1859), I, 118–120.

[5] *Selections From the Calcutta Gazette*, ed. W. S. Seton-Karr (Calcutta: Military Orphan Press, 1864), pp. 201–202.

[6] *Review of the Affairs of India*, 1798–1806, Vol. LXIX of *India Office Library Tracts* (London: T. Cadwell, 1807), p. 14.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[8] C. H. Philips, *The East India Company*, 1784–1834 (Ind. reprint, Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 103.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 141–144.

and hatred of France and the very real danger of French expansion in India:

> It cannot be denied that during the convulsions with which the doctrines of the French Revolution have agitated the Continent of Europe, erroneous principles of the same dangerous tendency had reached the minds of some individuals in the civil and military service of the Company in India. . . . To fix and establish sound and correct principles of religion and government in their minds at an early period of life was the best security which could be provided for the stability of the British power in India. . . .[10]

On July 10, 1800, Wellesley proclaimed the formation of a college at Fort William which he hoped would transform inept, self-seeking servants of the East India Company into efficient, devoted civil servants of the British Empire in India. Wellesley's Minute of August 18, 1800, in which the college statutes were spelled out in detail, brought into being on November 24 of the same year an experimental institution of higher learning designed to extend the Hastings ideal of a generation earlier to every servant of the Company establishment.

The British possessions in India now constituted a great empire. In spite of the fact that Parliamentary Acts of 1773, 1784, and 1793 acknowledged the responsibilities of administration for the Company, little had been done officially to require writers, factors, and merchants to prepare themselves as judges, administrators, and statesmen.[11] Boys still came to India at the age of thirteen to sixteen and were apprenticed as copying clerks. There was no formal instruction or orientation, and it seems almost miraculous that a few good men did somehow develop into honest, capable servants. Furthermore, young men freshly arrived from England often embarked upon a way of living which in some cases led to dissipation and physical decline.[12]

For these reasons primarily Wellesley directed that a college be founded comparable to Cambridge and Oxford in size and in the

[10] *Minute on the Foundation of a College at Fort William*, July 10, 1800, reprinted in *The Despatches, Minutes and Correspondence of the Marquess Wellesley, K. G.; during his Administration in India*, ed. M. Martin (London: W. H. Allen, 1837), II, 346.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 329.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 330.

diversity of means it offered for enriching the intellect.[13] Professorships were to be established "as soon as may be practicable and a regular course of lectures commenced."[14] Besides Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit, six Indian "vernaculars" would be taught.[15] Muslim and Hindu law would be studied, as well as English law, jurisprudence, and the laws enacted by the Governor-General-in-Council. A course on political economy was visualized similar to the one that Malthus would later teach at Haileybury. World geography and mathematics would be offered. The modern languages of Europe as well as Latin, Greek, and the English classics would be provided for. Wellesley not only saw the need for courses in ancient and modern European history but organized a course in cooperation with the Asiatic Society of Bengal called the History and Antiquities of Hindustan and the Deccan.[16] Finally, included among the sciences were natural history, botany, chemistry, and astronomy.

To neutralize the temptations of the novice's first encounter with Calcutta, college discipline and general administration would be in the hands of two Anglican clergymen. Instruction would be for three years, each year being divided into four quarters. Public examinations and disputations in the native languages would be held annually, and qualified students were to receive prizes—including liberal cash awards. In this connection Wellesley made it clear that thenceforth "promotion in the civil service shall be a necessary result of merit publicly approved according to the discipline and institutions of the College."[17]

With the aim of counteracting the prevalent tendency of civil servants in Calcutta to contract debts, Wellesley authorized a three-hundred-rupee monthly allowance for students during their three-year course of study. Theretofore, many a young man, in the hope of keeping up with his peers, had found it necessary to gamble at cards and bet on horseraces.[18] More often than not, he began to live beyond his means and fell prey to the alluring offers of loans

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 343.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 354.

[15] The languages were Hindustani, Bengali, Telegu, Marathi, Tamil, and Kannada. *Regulations for the Foundation of a College*, August 18, 1800, *ibid.*, p. 359.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 360.

[18] B. V. Roy, *Old Calcutta Cameos* (Calcutta: S. K. Chatterjee, 1946), pp. 26–28.

by enterprising Bengali moneylenders, who were flocking to the metropolis in great numbers.

Wellesley realized that the Court of Directors would never approve such a college if its expenditures in any way reduced the dividends of Company stockholders. He decided, therefore, that expenses should be met by a "small contribution from all the civil servants in India to be deducted from their salaries."[19] Wellesley also directed that additional income be derived from the profits of a government printing press.

[19] *Minute of July 10, 1800*, in Martin, *Wellesley* Despatches, p. 355.

IV

Recruitment of a Faculty

Wellesley diligently set about staffing his proposed "Oxford of the East," and since his program was an extension of that of Hastings, it was logical that he turn to the earliest generation of Orientalists. He was presumably determined to carry out his plan as quickly as possible and then present London with an accomplished fact.

Persian, the language of Mughal rule in India, was given high priority and a department was organized by Neil B. Edmonstone, then official Persian translator to the government and a key official in the Diplomatic Office.[1] Assisting him were John H. Harington, High Court judge and active Asiatic Society member who had been in India since 1780, and Francis Gladwin, the linguistically proficient soldier-diplomat whom Hastings had sent to Tibet in 1783.[2]

For Arabic studies, Wellesley selected Lt. John Baillie, one of the few available men proficient in that language now that William Jones was dead and Nathaniel Halhed was back in England.[3] Arabic was considered second in importance to Persian not only because it was the classical language of the Islamic world but because it was the vehicle of many key Mughal legal texts.

The Hindustani Language and Literature Department was entrusted by Wellesley to John B. Gilchrist, who in the early 1790's

[1] Edmonstone, an aristocrat like Wellesley, had been in India since 1783. In 1791, Cornwallis chose him to translate into Bengali the existing regulations for the administration of criminal law.

[2] In 1775 Francis Gladwin distinguished himself by writing an *English-Persian Vocabulary* in which he analyzed the influence of Arabic on Persian and Persian on Hindustani.

[3] Jones, it may be recalled, died in 1794; Halhed left for England in 1785.

had left his medical and commercial careers behind him, come to Calcutta, and ambitiously turned to the Indian lingua franca as his passport to Orientalist respectability.[4] An Urdu grammar and dictionary won for him the notice of the governor-general, who in 1798 appointed Gilchrist director of a pilot project for the College of Fort William.

H. T. Colebrooke was Wellesley's logical choice to develop a Sanskrit Department. Interestingly enough, the classical language of the majority of India's inhabitants was not a required subject at the college. The reason was that this language of Hindu antiquity, although of considerable scholarly interest, was necessarily less important than the languages of the Muslims whom the British had replaced as rulers.

Indeed, in 1800, with the exception of Bengali, the English knew virtually nothing of the Hindu vernaculars. It was probably out of ignorance, therefore, that Wellesley casually invested one man with the responsibility of teaching and cultivating all Hindu popular languages. The man chosen to fill this peripheral post was a remarkable Baptist missionary named William Carey. It is worthy of note that Carey, later honored by many scholars as the "father of modern Bengali prose," was originally hired with great reluctance by Wellesley and at a salary and rank below those of any other member of the staff.

Destined to become the most productive scholar in the history of the College of Fort William, Carey, like his Orientalist colleagues, was an acculturated Englishman. His life and work in Bengal provides an excellent case study of an eighteenth-century religious counterpart of the secular Orientalists in Company service. By mastering languages and by carefully studying the literature and culture of the Bengali people with whom he lived, Carey underwent an intellectual change no less significant than that of any servant of the Hastings administration.

It might be added that Carey was not the first Protestant missionary in India known to have become Orientalized as a result of acculturation. Early in the eighteenth century, at the Danish port of Tranquebar in Tamilnad, a German Lutheran named Ziegenbalg experienced a similar change.

In 1706, when he first arrived in Tamilnad, Ziegenbalg was com-

[4] *Supra*, p. 31.

pletely ignorant of the "Malabaree language and Culture."[5] Because there were no German or Latin books available, he began to study Tamil. Two years later, he felt sufficiently competent to start a Tamil translation of the New Testament.[6] At the same time, he used the language to probe deeply into Tamil history and thought. By 1713, when he published his second book, *On the Malabarees*, for European consumption, it was already evident to his superiors in Europe that he was "showing sympathy for the heathen Malabaree culture."[7] In fact, as Ziegenbalg's biographer, E. Arno Lehman, has pointed out, his fellow Christians in Europe had understated the case: "As he (Ziegenbalg) immersed himself in Tamil literature, he himself, was able to think much better of them . . . how these Malabar heathen had attained as high a level as the ancient Greeks and Romans; yes, had completely surpassed them."[8]

The missionaries not only continually defended the Tamils against charges of barbarism but went so far as to claim that the people of Malabar "were often more moral than Christians by their upright life."[9] In a reaction that recalls the trouble Carey would experience later with the home office, one Lutheran Church official wrote back angrily to Ziegenbalg that "the missionaries were sent out to exterminate heathenism in India, not to spread heathen nonsense all over Europe."[10]

It is evident then that Carey's experience in Bengal was neither unique nor without precedent in South Asia, but represented a special kind of acculturation process. It is interesting to speculate how much of the eighteenth-century world view rubbed off on him and predisposed him for his Orientalist role. As early as 1786, Carey had assembled in England his arguments for a Protestant missionary movement, in a manuscript later published as *Enquiry Into the Obligations of Christians to use the Means of Conversion of the Heathen.*

The document reveals that Carey had not only read the travel literature of the period but felt a sympathetic fascination for the peoples and cultures in areas remote from European experience. In one of the best and most recent of the biographies on the Baptist

[5] E. A. Lehman, *It Began at Tranquebar: A History of the First Protestant Mission in India* (Wittenberg, Germany: Christian Literature Society, 1956), p. 24.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 31–32.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 32
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] *Ibid.*

missionary, A. H. Oussoren relates how, in 1785, Carey as a teacher-clergyman in England constructed a leather globe with a large world map and taught children by "marking down the population, language, customs and religion" of all the known peoples of the world.[11]

The *Enquiry* not only clearly expresses this cosmopolitan outlook but also the complementary value of tolerance. The purpose of a Christian missionary movement, Carey believed, was not to impose one culture upon another but to make the heathens "useful members of their society."[12] The proper means for converting them was not by teaching one's language to the "heathen" elite, but to reach the masses in their own languages.[13] Above all, he urged missionaries to work toward the "cultivation of friendship." In Carey's view, missionaries "must be careful not to resent injuries which may be offered to them, not to think highly of themselves, so as to despise the heathens, and by those means lay a foundation for their resentment, or rejection of the gospel."[14]

When the *Enquiry* was written in 1786, Carey was twenty-five years old and already an ordained minister in the Baptist Church.[15] Self-educated and by his own admission a plodder rather than innately intelligent, Carey had long ago risen above the condition of his father, a peasant working the English soil at five shillings a week.[16] In most biographies, Carey is credited with an amazing linguistic ability which supposedly made him a master of Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and Dutch before he was fifteen.[17] In 1779 he renounced the Church of England and joined the Baptist ranks.[18]

When Carey was approached for a position in the College of Fort William he was thirty-nine years old, despised by the respectable Europeans in India for his "anabaptism," distrusted by his own

[11] A. H. Oussoren, *William Carey Especially His Missionary Principles* (Leiden: A. W. Sithoff's Uitgeversmaat schappij, 1945), p. 29.

[12] W. Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use the Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*, new facsimile edition (London: Carey Kingsgate, Ltd., 1961), p. 70.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 74.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 75.

[15] W. L. Woodall, *William Carey of India* (New York: Pageant Press, 1951), p. 14.

[16] G. Smith, *Life of William Carey, D. D.* (London: John Murray, 1885), p. 1.

[17] S. Mookerjee, "William Carey," *Calcutta Review*, XLXII (September, 1934), 347.

[18] Oussoren, p. 25.

Baptist Society in England for his commercial activities, and tormented by self-doubts as a preacher of the gospel because he had made virtually no conversions among the "heathen" in six years.

In the midst of hard physical labor, and beset by enormous personal and other problems, Carey had applied himself vigorously to the study of the Bengali and Sanskrit languages. His early letters to the Baptist Society in England were filled with minute details of his slow, methodical struggle to master these tongues. In a letter to the Brethren dated January 16, 1798, Carey wrote that he was so busy learning languages, correcting former translations of the Scriptures, and translating new material, that he could not even keep his journal up to date. He added, "I am writing the whole[New Testament] with my own hand, in the Bengali character. It is considerable labour, notwithstanding that I write it as quick as I do English. . . . Besides this I am learning the Sangskrito Language which with only the help procured here, is perhaps the hardest Language in the world. I am at work on a Sangskrito Grammar and Dictionary. . . ."[19]

Letters such as this indicate that at that time Carey's linguistic undertakings were no more than a means to an end. Before he was hired at the college his sole aim had been to reach the "heathen" through their own vernacular and classical languages.[20] Carey dreamed of a mission with a dedicated and highly versatile band of brethren who would be equipped with printing presses and cheap, worm-proof paper, all working to disseminate knowledge and spiritual truth to the Indian masses, long before Marshman and Ward disembarked on Indian soil.[21]

Unfortunately for Carey, so long as the Government of India discouraged missionary activity in Bengal and so long as he was dependent on the hard-pressed Baptist Society in England for funds, his dream remained unfulfilled. In one of a dozen letters which reiterated the same theme, Carey pleaded for financial support to publish his translations of the New Testament. "Whether a Printing Press shall be sent from England," he wrote in 1797, "or whether it shall be printed here or whether it shall be printed at all now

[19] Letters from William Carey to the Baptist Mission Society, January 16, 1798, in William Carey Letters (Baptist Mission Society Archives, London), Box 3. (Cited hereafter as Carey Letters.)

[20] This was his position even as early as 1794, as we can see in a letter to the Brethren on August 5, 1794; *ibid.*

[21] In a letter to Fuller written on June 22, 1797, Carey proposed a Moravian-type plan for the Mission; *ibid.*

rests with the Society. . . ."[22] Even as late as 1799 Carey was still begging for funds from his Brethren. In a letter written on January 10 of that year Carey estimated that it would cost £2,000 to print and circulate 1,000 copies of the New Testament. He informed his associates that it was a conservative estimate, which would cover type, paper, and skilled workmen, and that the Society must be in a position to underwrite the total cost.[23] Three months later he reported that he had been able to raise some 2,400 rupees for the expense of casting type. His plan now was to publish the whole Bible in four volumes at a cost of £700 or 16,000 rupees. He hoped to sell half the number of books printed for 32 rupees each and to give the rest away.[24]

By July, 1799, however, Carey's optimism seemed to have vanished. His dream of establishing a mission to begin the full-scale work of publication and conversion seemed crushed. The Government of India, under Wellesley, had instructed the district magistrates to rid Bengal of all foreigners who were not covenanted servants of the Company. For the first time Carey actually admitted in a letter that missionary settlement in English India was impossible. Besides this, the indigo factory that he managed in order to survive had been destroyed by severe floods, and his savings were almost depleted as a result.[25] In despair, Carey wrote Fuller, "you must be tired reading such a Letter as this, about nothing but things Temporal. I wish I could say other things. . . ."[26]

Once more the indefatigable Carey raised several thousand rupees, with which he purchased another indigo factory. Whether or not this business venture would ultimately have succeeded we can never know. Conceivably he might have continued his life as an obscure planter-padre had it not been for two crucial events. But for these events in 1799–1800 William Carey might never have fulfilled himself as a brilliant educator, linguist, and missionary.

One Sunday morning, on October 15, 1799, just as dawn was breaking, another obscure missionary named Joshua Marshman fell to his knees at the Danish settlement of Serampore fifteen miles from Calcutta and thanked God that both he and his party had reached India safely. Only a few hours before, Governor-general

[22] Carey to Fuller, March 23, 1797, *ibid.*
[23] Carey to the Brithren, January 10, 1799, *ibid.*
[24] Carey to the Baptist Mission Society, April 1, 1799, *ibid.*
[25] Carey to the Baptist Mission Society, July 17, 1799, *ibid.*
[26] *Ibid.*

Wellesley had ordered an American ship to escort its "subversive" passengers—Marshman and his companions—to the police station. If Captain Wickes refused, he would not be permitted to unload his cargo in Calcutta. Wellesley was convinced that these men were actually Jacobins in disguise.

Carey must have had mixed feelings about the arrival of Marshman's party in Serampore, although he did not disclose them in his correspondence. He undoubtedly was happy at the safe conclusion of their long journey. However, since his original plan had been to organize the mission near his indigo factory, he had instructed these adventurous Baptists to pose as indigo cultivators and not to make an issue of their missionary objectives.[27] Had not Carey himself managed to remain in Bengal all these years without incurring direct official opposition? In vain he tried to persuade the government to permit his friends to join him.

The second crucial event which altered the course of Carey's life took place on November 23, 1800, the day before the opening of the College of Fort William. Carey had been called to Calcutta for an important meeting with Reverend Claudius Buchanan, Vice-Provost of the College. This conference prepared the way for reconciliation between the government and the newly arrived Serampore missionaries, made it possible for Carey to be hired as a teacher in the college, and promised lucrative rewards for linguistic and other means of assistance that the missionaries might offer in support of Wellesley's institution.

The Bengali Hindu literati who in 1801 found employment at the College of Fort William, and who were expected to assist European professors in compiling textbooks or in lending authenticity to language classes, were by no means representative of a unitary society or culture. Indologists such as Colebrooke quickly observed that Bengali Hinduism, though related to other forms of Hinduism by means of the Sanskritic culture, had developed its own peculiarities both on the high and popular cultural levels. By 1800, however, after a half-century or more of unusually severe socio-economic stress and its corresponding cultural repercussions, the composite of socio-cultural practices and attitudes of the Bengali people—Kulin Brahmanism, sectarian Buddhism, Vaishnavism, and a unique kind of Hindu-Muslim syncretism, among other elements—seemed to have lost the ethos which had been its cohesive force.

[27] Marshman, I, 111.

The first Bengali pundits to be employed at the College of Fort William had seen their province pass from the chaos of a disintegrating Moghul empire to the stability of the British empire in India. Most of the pundits were born during the administration of Warren Hastings (1772–85), soon after the political upheaval in 1757, unparalleled economic exploitation between 1756 and 1770, and the disastrous famine of 1770–72.[28] They also saw nature itself play havoc with western Bengal's river system in the later decades of the century, causing it to withdraw from vital old commercial and cultural centers and creating entirely new rivers that displaced economic opportunities toward the east.[29]

This period of prolonged and chronic social and economic distress in Bengal was reflected in cultural decay. It is common for scholars of Bengali literature to refer to the period between Bharat Chandra's death in 1760 and the opening of the College of Fort William in 1800 as the least productive in the entire literary history of Bengal.[30] S. K. De has perhaps gone farthest of all in linking the literary and cultural decadence of the period to the gradual disappearance of the old order in Bengal:

> It is obvious that under these political, social, and intellectual conditions, no literature worth the name could easily flourish. With the ruin of the zemindars and the depredation of the Brahmans, who constituted respectively the aristocracy of wealth and the aristocracy of intellect, a process of disintegration had begun in the social fabric which ended in an absolute dissolution of all social solidarity.[31]

In 1778, when Nathaniel Halhed published the first Bengali grammar using Bengali script, he was appalled at the decadent state of Bengal's language, literature and general culture.[32] Applying European principles of grammar to Bengali was difficult for him because the language seemed to have lost "its general underlying principles."[33] Its "unsettled" orthography exasperated him.[34] He

[28] For a reliable analysis of the famine of 1770, see Sinha, *Economic History*, II, 48–67.

[29] R. Mukerjee, *The Changing Face of Bengal: A Study in Riverine Economy* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1938).

[30] See especially De, pp. 5–56.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

[32] N. B. Halhed, *A Grammar of the Bengal Language* (Hooghly: n.p., 1778), Preface.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] *Ibid.*

found "no clear cut division between colloquial and literary Bengali."[35] Furthermore, he had been assured that Bengal's literary tradition was rich, but upon investigation he could discover "no more than a half-dozen old Bengali works."[36]

Several British surveys and reports of the first decade of the nineteenth century portray Bengal as suffering from literary and academic sterility, primitive forms of religion, and progressive stiffening of social attitudes and practices. The Wellesley-sponsored survey of the Twenty-four Pargannas, Hooghly, and Midnapore in 1801, and Francis Buchanan's survey of most of the other districts of Bengal in 1807, 1808, and 1809, were depressingly negative in their depiction of the prevailing state of indigenous institutions.[37] Individual reports such as Carey's on his mission to Nabadvip in 1801 on behalf of the College of Fort William were also extremely unfavorable. Interestingly enough, Carey had gone to Nabadvip to enlist support for the college from "the illustrious center of Bengali language and literature" but discovered that there existed "no more than 40 separate works, all in manuscript, as the whole literature of 30,000,000 of people up to that time."[38]

The majority of pundits hired at the College of Fort William in 1801[39] were Brahman scholars of Bengal who were beginning to come to Calcutta in the 1790's from ancestral villages and towns in rural Bengal.[40] They were almost all members of the three subcastes which monopolized the Sanskrit *tols* throughout Bengal—the Varendra, Rorhi, and Vaidikar.[41] As traditional literati, their most common professions were those of logician, law specialist, astrologer, and instructor of Sanskrit poetics, sacred literature and Puranic mythology.[42] Significantly, in the light of Rammohun Roy's major criticism of Hinduism several decades later, Bengal

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] The results of these exhaustive surveys may be found in *History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India*, comp. M. Martin (3 vols.; London: W. H. Allen and Company, 1838).

[38] Carey letter to Baptist Mission Society, n.d., quoted in De, p. 47.

[39] Among the original pundits hired by the Bengali Department were Mrtyuñjay Vidyalankar, Rāmnāth Viddabāchashpati, Sripati Mukhopadhyāy, and Rājiblochan Mukhopādhyāy.

[40] These Brahman centers in the Twenty-four Pargannas, Hooghly, and Nuddea are described in W. Adam, *Reports on the State of Education in Bengal, 1835 and 1838* (Rep. paper; Calcutta: University of Calcutta Press, 1941), pp. 22, 57, 75.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 249.

[42] *Ibid.*

had virtually no Vedantic schools and, with the possible exception of Nabakrishna Deb's pundit, Jaganath Tarkapanchanan, and one of Rammohun's own pundits, Ram Chandra Vidyabagish,[43] we have little evidence of Vedantists developing in the region's highly scholastic and ritualized cultural atmosphere.[44]

It is also important to stress that, despite the reputation of Bengal's indigenous universities, eighteenth-century Bengal was not generally considered a center for "definitive" knowledge about Hinduism. The Bengali literati apparently considered Benares such a center. Whether legendary or actual, Rammohun Roy's knowledge of Hinduism has been valued chiefly because he is said to have acquired it in Benares. Even as late as the 1840's Debendranath Tagore felt it necessary to send four Brahmans to Benares to discover whether or not the Vedas were infallible.[45] The Orientalists of the Asiatic Society, before the establishment of the College of Fort William, generally ignored Bengali Hindu scholars and took every opportunity to go to Benares for reliable information. Finally, it should be remembered that the only government-sponsored Hindu college in the eighteenth century was not established in Bengal but in Benares by Jonathan Duncan.

These Bengali Brahman scholars who had little knowledge or interest in Persian and even less in English began to find their position indeed precarious as the old zemindari class, their only source of patronage, gradually approached extinction.[46] The Rani Bhowani of Rajshahi, for example, who was perhaps the most generous of all patrons to Bengali Brahmans, found herself as early as the 1770's trapped between the government's revenue policies on the one hand and the unscrupulous practices of Calcutta banians on the other.[47] The Rani, it might be pointed out, was in 1792 one of the first zemindars forced into selling some of their land by public auction.[48]

A second major type of Bengali literati on the eve of the nine-

[43] Biographical sketch of Rāmchandra Vidyābāgis in *Tattvabodhinī patrika*, April, 1845, quoted in B. N. Bandyopadhyay, *Rāmchandra Vidyābāgis* (Sāhitya–sādhak–charitmāla series; Kalikāta: Bangiya Sāhitya Parishat, 1956), pp. 5–7. Cited hereafter as S-s-c series.

[44] Bannerji, p. 86.

[45] Müller, p. 40.

[46] On this problem see A. Tripathi, *Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency, 1793–1833* (Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1956), p. 18; Sinha, Economic History, II, 147–182; De, pp. 24–30.

[47] Sinha, *Economic History*, II, 73–74.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

teenth century consisted of the Persianized Hindus. Moghul policy throughout Hindustan had been generally tolerant and welcomed Hindu participation in both the high and middle ranks of its administration.[49] In Bengal, during the Moghul period, just as the Islamic mysticism of Sufism helped fuse the popular culture of the Hindus and Muslims,[50] a Persianized cultural pattern was pervading the arts, literature, and etiquette and contributing to a syncretic high culture shared by many elitist Hindus and Muslims. Many Hindus wore Persian dress, spoke and wrote Persian as well as any educated Muslim, and, if Bengali Hindu literature of the eighteenth century accurately reflects their thoughts and sentiments, embraced a Persianized world-view to a considerable degree.[51] It is important to add, however, that the Bengali literati, whether high-caste Brahmans or Kayasthas, apparently were never fully assimilated into the Islamic culture but remained Hindus.

Many Hindu and Muslim zemindars shared the same fate when in March, 1793, Cornwallis changed the legal status of these traditional tax collectors and made them landlords obliged to pay a fixed tax every year or lose their property. Whether from lack of industry or inability to function in the new role, zemindars were being displaced by the new urban commercial elite of Calcutta who had the wealth and influence to buy up considerable property lost by default.[52] What probably hurt the Persianized Hindu most of all was the Cornwallis policy of excluding natives from the responsible posts in the administration, thus leaving this highly educated group unemployed.[53] On the other hand, long association with an alien culture may well have enabled many of these people to survive, since they were flexible enough to adjust to the new socio-cultural values of the European. This was particularly true of the Tagore family, which soon had established profitable relations with the French in Chandernagore and with the English in Calcutta,[54] and of Rammohun Roy, who grew wealthy from his association with English

[49] Spear, *Nabobs*, p. xvi.

[50] See section on Bengal Sufism in "Bibliographic Notes on Early, Medieval and Modern Sufism with Special Reference to its Bengali–Indian Development," D. Kopf, *Folklore*, VIII (February, 1962), 72–80.

[51] It has become customary for Bengali scholars to look upon the eighteenth-century Persian atmosphere as culturally depraved. See De, pp. 25–26.

[52] Tripathi, p. 18.

[53] *Infra*, p. 239.

[54] The Tagore family's relations with the French and English are sketched in *A Brief Account of the Tagore Family*, Vol. CXXVII of *India Office Library Tracts* (Calcutta: I. C. Bose and Co., 1868), pp. 1–13.

civil servants.[55] Ramram Basu, another Persianized Hindu, accommodated himself neatly to the Baptist missionaries and was one of the first munshis hired at the College of Fort William in 1801.

Throughout the latter half of the eighteenth century, while Calcutta developed as an urban center, many Bengalis accumulated riches through advantageous associations with the Europeans, profiting by the vacuum created from the deterioration of Mughal authority and the adventurism of European commercial expansion. Nabakrishna Deb, who founded the Sabhabajar Raj family, was powerful and wealthy as a result of his close contact with Clive and Hastings.[56] Gobindaram Mitra, Holwell's "black deputy," made his money as a collector in Calcutta and promptly bought land with it—much to the advantage of his descendants.[57] During the Napoleonic wars, Ramdulal Dey built his fortune largely on the American shipping trade, which flourished at the expense of Company shipping.[58]

These mid-eighteenth-century figures were members of an economic elite, but their generation, perhaps because they were far too preoccupied with trade and finance, produced no modern intellectual class. They were mostly banians, largely of obscure caste origins in spite of their surnames, who subsequently raised their caste status by adopting the cultural and religious customs of higher castes.[59] They spent their money buying land, building bathing ghats and temples, exhibiting dancing girls, and lavishly fulfilling their religious and familial obligations.[60]

Their descendants were more inclined to literary activity but, like Radhakant Deb (grandson of Nabakrishna), they were prosperous enough to maintain themselves independently. Despite his wealth, Tarinicharan Mitra, a friend of Radhakant, sought employment at the College of Fort William. Both Tarinicharan and Radhakant represented the new Hindu of linguistic ability who was

[55] *Infra*, p. 197.

[56] Y. C. Bāgal, Rādhākant Deb (S-s-c series; 1957), p. 5.

[57] *An Account of the Late Govindram Mitter*, Vol. CCCLXIX of *India Office Library Tracts* (Calcutta: National Press, 1869), p. 65.

[58] G. C. Ghose, *A Lecture on the Life of Ramdoolal Dey*, Vol. CXXXVII of *India Office Library Tracts* (Bellore: Bengali Press, 1868), p. 59.

[59] This process of Sanskritization is described in M. N. Srinivas, "A note on Sanskritization and Westernization," *Far Eastern Quarterly*, XV (August, 1956), reprinted in *Introduction to the Civilization of India*, comp. M. Singer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 365–380.

[60] Nabakrishna Deb spent nine lakhs of rupees on his mother's *sradh* ceremony. Sinha, *Economic History*, II, 223.

enjoying the benefits of a cosmopolitan urbanized setting. They cultivated English for the same basic economic reasons as did their fathers, though they now regarded Persian and Urdu as less necessary, although still useful. For the new generation, also, a knowledge of Sanskrit was particularly important in carrying out the socio-religious activities mentioned above, aimed at maintaining their newly won status. This unusual linguistic background especially endeared Mitra to John Gilchrist, who promptly hired him as the second pundit in the Muslim-dominated Hindustani Department.[61]

Between 1801 and 1805, Wellesley's dream of a university of the East was in large part realized through the phenomenal growth of the College of Fort William. Between November 24, 1800, and October 31, 1801, 630,000 rupees (£78,750) had been spent on the institution's various activities.[62] All the known languages of India were being taught by professors earning as much as 2,600 rupees (£320) per month. They were assisted by an Asian faculty whose numbers increased each year and who received salaries ranging from 40 to 200 rupees per month.[63] Students not only were wined and dined at Company expense but each received a monthly allowance of 300 rupees. They were given free textbooks and encouraged to compete for yearly achievement prizes which sometimes amounted to 5,000 rupees each.[64]

The campus of the college, originally intended to be at Garden Reach to the south of Calcutta, was finally situated in the centrally located Writers' Buildings on present-day Dalhousie Square, which had been used since 1780 to house newly arrived junior writers.[65] In this complex of buildings the government, between 1801 and 1805, partitioned off and furnished classrooms, at least one science laboratory, a library, administrative and other offices, a dining room and the professorial quarters.[66]

After 1803, public examinations and disputations were held in the newly constructed Government House (a grandiose building which had cost £140,000 and was built without the knowledge or

[61] Indian National Archives, New Delhi. "Proceedings of the College of Fort William," in *Home Miscellaneous Series*, DLIX (May, 1801), 4. Cited hereafter as PCFW.

[62] *Ibid.* (October 31, 1801), 12.

[63] *Ibid.* (April 24, 1801), 1–6.

[64] T. Roebuck, *Annals of the College of Fort William* (Calcutta: Hindoostanee Press, 1819, pp. i–xlvii.

[65] Newton, p. 8.

[66] PCFW, DLIX (January 8, 1802), 23.

consent of the Court of Directors).[67] Disputations in Indian languages were conducted in a large and stately columned hall paved with dark grey marble and illuminated by costly imported chandeliers. From Wellesley's administration through that of Marquess Hastings this event was the most important social function of the year. A description of the occasion written in 1818 by a visitor to Calcutta contained the following passage:

> In a state chair covered with crimson velvet and richly gilt, with a group of aides-de-camp and secretaries standing behind him, sat the Governor-General. Two servants with state punkahs of crimson silk were fanning him, and behind them again were several Native servants bearing silver staffs. Next to him, on either side, were seated the examiners, and below them again, the most distinguished ladies of the Presidency. Next in an open space, were two small rostrums for the disputants, and chairs for the professors; the room behind these, and fronting the Marquis, was quite filled with company, and in the rear of all, the bodyguard was drawn up in full uniforms of scarlet with naked sabres.[68]

At the apex of the college power structure was the governor-general, who was assisted by a College Council composed of his most trusted associates.[69] Matters of discipline were entrusted to a provost and vice-provost (both clergymen), who during these early years were also concerned with academic affairs. The European faculty that Wellesley went through such great trouble and expense to recruit represented, by 1805, a dozen departments. Through them, knowledge of Europe and Asia were disseminated to the student body (see table 3).[70]

The students were covenanted servants of the Company, who had won their opportunity for a career in India not by merit through competitive examination but by patronage. In some cases, perhaps, the myth of the returning nabob still excited a greed for quick riches which was sharpened by a relative's reminiscences. From mid-summer 1800 on, these young men were met at the docks, taken from the ship to the dormitory, and bluntly informed that they were to spend the next three years at an institution of

[67] Newton, p. 3.

[68] "Sketches of India," *Calcutta Journal*, I, New Series (January 3, 1822), 26.

[69] In 1801 the Council was composed of Wellesley, Brown, Harlow, Buchanan, and Edmonstone. PCFW, DLIX (June 30, 1801), 10.

[70] *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of the Reverend Claudius Buchanan, Vice Provost of the College of Fort William*, comp. H. Pearson (New York: Kirk and Mercin, 1818), p. 148.

higher learning where they would study subjects never before taught in Europe at any level.[71]

Table 3

DEPARTMENTS OF THE COLLEGE OF FORT WILLIAM, AND KEY INSTRUCTORS, 1800–1805

Department	*European Instructor*	*Branch of Service*	*Teaching Qualification*
Arabic	Baillie, J.	Military	Interpreter
Bengali	Carey, W.	Missionary	New Testament translation into Bengali
Comparative Legal Studies	Barlow, H.	Civil	Helped draft permanent settlement
European Classics	Buchanan, C.	Chaplain	B. A. Degree, Cambridge
European History	Buchanan, C.	Chaplain	B. A. Degree, Cambridge
Hindu Languages	Carey, W.	(Same as above)	(Same as above)
Hindustani	Gilchrist, J.	Former surgeon	Urdu dictionary and grammar
History and Antiquities of Hindustan and Deccan	Asiatic Society members	All branches	Orientalist scholarship
Persian	Lumsden, M.	Civil	Interpreter, translator
Religious Instruction	Brown, D.	Chief Company chaplain	Anglican clergyman
Sanskrit	Colebrooke, H.	Civil and Judiciary	Translations and scholarly articles
Science and Mathematics	Dinwiddie, R.	?	?

SOURCE: Compiled principally from Proceedings of the College of Fort William, *Home Miscellaneous Series*. Indian National Archives, New Delhi.

[71] *The Statutes of the College of Fort William in Bengal* (Calcutta: Honorable Company Press, 1841), pp. 1–12.

PART III

The College of Fort William and the Bengal Renaissance 1800-1813

In the eighteenth century, on the eve of the establishment of British rule, the Hindus had no recollection of their real past, nor any idea of the true character of the classical Sanskritic civilization. Their Hinduism was a broken-up and simplified version of the Hinduism of ancient India. It was unorganized in space and unsupported in time. Its quality was neutral where it was not purely negative.

—NIRAD CHAUDHURI

No doubt, the College of Fort William's greatest achievement in the history of intellectual progress in this country consists in its revival of the ancient culture of the land, with its all-comprehensive orientalism daring far beyond the intrepid dreams of scholars like Sir William Jones, Wilkins, and Colebrooke.

—SUSHIL KUMAR DE

V

The College as Pivot of an Institutional Complex

Between 1801 and 1805, the college not only had evolved into an institution where fifty or more civil servants were being intellectually exposed to India in classrooms but had become the center of a costly program of literary patronage and linguistic research. More than a hundred original works in oriental languages were published by presses largely financed by the college.[1] Expeditions to Mysore, Travancore, and Ceylon were organized and sponsored for the purpose of discovering and cataloguing manuscripts for the use of the growing college library.[2] Projects were initiated in collaboration with institutions such as the Asiatic Society of Bengal to publish European translations of Indian classics.[3] By 1805 the college had become a veritable laboratory where Europeans and Asians worked out new transliteration schemes, regularized spoken languages into precise grammatical forms, and compiled dictionaries in languages relatively unknown in Europe.

Until the Wellesley era, the Asiatic Society was loosely organized, without any solid institutional base or constitution. It depended on the enthusiasm of its members for scholarly research and voluntary contributions of money. There was no true executive

[1] British Museum Library, London, *Official Papers, Proceedings of the College of Fort William During its First Four Years*, comp. Claudius Buchanan (London: T. Caldwell and W. Davies, March 12, 1805), p. 156.

[2] PCFW, CLIX (March 7, 1805), 393, and (August 7, 1805), 430.

[3] Library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, "Manuscript-Proceedings," II (May 15, 1805), 19. Cited hereafter as LASB-MP.

body, but simply a president and a secretary who took minutes of each meeting.

After the death of Jones in 1794, the structural weakness of the Society became apparent, interest waned, and by July 1800, a resolution had to be adopted urging members to attend meetings, then being held only once every three months.[4] Finances were in such a chaotic state as a result of "members defaulting in payment" that the first treasurer, Henry Trail, resigned angrily on October 3, 1799.[5]

The earliest proposal for strengthening and stabilizing the institutional life of the Asiatic Society was offered at a meeting held on September 29, 1796. A special committee proposed "a charter of incorporation through the Governor-general," a regular admission fee and other "regular fees," the election of a treasurer and two vice-presidents annually, weekly meetings (as in the era of Jones), and the construction of a Society building to house a library and museum.[6] These propositions were embodied in a letter to John Shore, who was both Society president and governor-general. Shore was a friend of Charles Grant and later a member of the Clapham sect, and his attitude toward Orientalism was ambivalent. This may account for his cool reception of the proposal. However, by 1797 new executive officers had been chosen and a treasury created. Also, a special committee was formed to screen papers to be read at future meetings.[7]

The next few years saw a continuing struggle to find a permanent place to house the Society and its growing acquisitions of books, coins, and botanical specimens.[8] Other schemes were devised with the aim of making the Society both the chief repository of Orientalist works in the world and the primary agency for the dissemination of oriental research to European centers of learning.[9]

It was not until the Wellesley administration, however, that the Asiatic Society gradually completed the process of institutionalization. Between 1801 and 1804, Wellesley made use of the Society by recruiting his faculty members from it and by enlisting its organizational support for his college program. This arrangement

[4] Mitra, *Centenary Review*, Part I, p. 19.
[5] LASB-MP, I (October 3, 1799), 146.
[6] *Ibid.* (September 29, 1796), 116.
[7] *Ibid.* (September 29, 1796), 117.
[8] *Ibid.* (May 3, 1798), 130.
[9] *Ibid.* (December 6, 1798), 137.

seemed mutually satisfactory for a time, and the Society was able to maintain its informal but exclusive club-like atmosphere.

On April 2, 1800, John Gilchrist (later, Hindustani professor at the College of Fort William) became secretary of the Society—a position which, in responsibility and importance, now came to be second to that of the president. H. H. Wilson and James Prinsep were destined to fill the post of secretary with distinction in later years.[10] Upon assuming his post, Gilchrist immediately reopened the question of building a house for the Society and won the approval of the majority of members.[11] It was not until 1804, after much campaigning by the Wellesley faction of Gilchrist, Harington, Buchanan, Anstruther, and Colebrooke, that the Society finally petitioned the government for assistance.[12] At that time the College of Fort William was facing the real danger of extinction, and the Wellesley clique in the Society began pushing very hard in an effort to transform the "club" into an institution with a more functional role in the execution of cultural policy.[13] Work commenced by 1805 on the Asiatic Society building at its present site on Park Street and Chowringhee.[14] When the building was completed in 1808, the first fully-equipped institution in the world for the advancement of Asian studies began to function.

Wellesley's college also provided both the impetus and the financial support for many of the original schemes of William Jones that had been regularly set aside for lack of funds. The notion of sponsoring oriental translations, for example, had been frequently proposed at Asiatic Society meetings. Gilchrist, on December 6, 1798, urged the Society not only to publish Indian classics but to "give them gratis to Colleges in America, Ireland, Britain, and Europe. . . ."[15]

Not until the establishment of the College of Fort William were the practical means for publishing Asian classics available. Even then, the Jones ideal of translations from the actual manuscripts was not realized because the purpose of the college was to prepare

[10] Wilson became secretary in 1811 and, except for an occasional leave of absence, served in that post until his departure for England in 1833. James Prinsep replaced him and held the post until his own departure in 1838.

[11] LASB-MP, II (May 6, 1801), 3.

[12] Mitra, *Centenary Review*, p. 21.

[13] *Infra*, pp. 134–136.

[14] LASB-MP, II (May 15, 1805), 19.

[15] *Ibid.*, I (December 6, 1798), 138.

textbooks based on the classics. The original texts were carefully abridged and altered in such a way as to make them acceptable to British students. Ironically, the initiative for promoting the Jones ideal came from the missionaries at Serampore. The Serampore Mission, which now had the best Sanskrit press in the world and had many excellent Hindu scholars associated with it, was willing and able to undertake the work of translating and printing. In 1805 the Serampore missionaries drew up a plan for a cooperative project involving the Asiatic Society, the college, and Serampore. William Carey, the Serampore missionary who was being groomed to replace Colebrooke as Sanskrit professor at Fort William, was selected as the European in charge of the operation.[16] In May, 1805, Claudius Buchanan, vice-provost of the College of Fort William, presented the Serampore plan to fellow Orientalists.[17] And in 1806, Carey chose the *Ramayana* as the first classic to be translated.

Through such joint activities, the Orientalist scholars at the Asiatic Society drew closer and closer to the College of Fort William. In 1807, Henry Colebrooke was chosen president of the College Council,[18] and in the same year the Asiatic Society selected him as president.[19] William Hunter, who succeeded Gilchrist as secretary of the Asiatic Society in 1804,[20] was also made secretary of the college in 1805.[21] The Asiatic Society library contained very few books or manuscripts until Colebrooke became its president and transferred a section of the college library to the Park Street building in 1808.[22] Whenever manuscripts or copies of inscriptions were sent from a remote place in India to Calcutta for analysis by the Asiatic Society, the college often paid the bill.

Wellesley's College of Fort William therefore revitalized the Asiatic Society by giving it a viable structure, by supporting its scholarship, and by making available its library and other resources for the promotion of Orientalism. Perhaps most important, the college, as a training center for civil servants, supplied the Asiatic Society with a younger generation of potential scholars to carry on the work of the men originally inspired by Hastings.

[16] *Ibid.*, II (May 15, 1805), 19.
[17] Letters from Carey to the Baptist Mission Society, January 1, 1806, Carey Letters, Box 3.
[18] PCFW, DLX (August, 1807), 316.
[19] LASB-MP, II (April 2, 1807), 23.
[20] *Ibid.* (April 4, 1804), 14.
[21] PCFW, DLX (November 1, 1805), 69.
[22] LASB-MP, II (April 1, 1807), 27.

John Leyden, H. H. Wilson, Brian Hodgson, and Thomas Roebuck were a few among the new generation of Orientalists who arrived in India after 1800 and who were initiated into Indological studies by serving in a professorial, examining, or student capacity at the college. It should be noted that, although these men were undoubtedly motivated by scholarly curiosity, they owed a great deal to the generosity of the College Council in its distribution of monetary grants—which may well have been the original stimulus for the students' willing cooperation, hard work, and prolific scholarly output. Whereas, in 1800, Wellesley as governor-general went to the Asiatic Society to recruit Orientalists for Fort William, in later years the Asiatic Society often turned to the college for men and financial aid.

The interaction between the College of Fort William and Serampore Mission that resulted ultimately in the systematic study of Hindu popular culture within the Bengal setting may be explained as the product of mutual institutional usefulness. The college was, after all, a school for training civil servants who were expected to go out to remote districts prepared to speak the language of the people. The scholarly interests of the Asiatic Society, emphasizing as it did classical culture and classical languages, would hardly suffice in training civil servants. In 1800, only the Serampore missionaries seemed organized for studying the popular culture or languages. It was no coincidence, then, that William Carey was responsible for cultivating every Indian vernacular language at the college with the exception of Urdu. Furthermore, only the Serampore Press had consistently thought it important enough that costly fonts of type be cast for the irregular and neglected languages of the Indian people. By 1805 the Serampore Mission Press could print any work in Bengali, Urdu, Oriya, Tamil, Telegu, Kanarese, or Marathi.[23]

On the other hand, Serampore Mission derived many advantages from its association with the college. Aside from the purely practical gains such as financial assistance, *de facto* recognition, and social mobility within the European community, the missionaries benefited chiefly by utilizing the fruits of college-directed activities for the ultimate purpose of mass evangelization. Carey was quite willing to prepare grammars and dictionaries of Indian tongues for

[23] M. S. Khan, "William Carey and the Serampore Books," *Libri*, II (1961), 231.

student use. No sooner had he derived the grammatical and lexicographical principles of a given language with the assistance of college pundits than he promptly translated the Bible into that language[24] and had it published at the Serampore Press. All the secular achievements of the college that accrued in the course of its cultural program were transformed into potentially useful weapons for conveying the gospel to the Hindu masses.

When William Carey arrived in the Danish colony of Serampore for the first time on January 10, 1800, he was accompanied by his four sons and a psychotic wife. After years of comparative security as an indigo planter, he found himself in a situation in which six missionaries—all suspect in the eyes of the Indian government—were expected to start a mission with a total capital outlay of 3,000 rupees or £375.[25] Two of the missionaries, Fountain and Ward, had police records in England for openly supporting or advocating the French revolutionary cause.[26]

During the week that followed their arrival, the brethren—more from necessity than from choice—decided to adopt a Moravian model for their missionary organization.[27] In a manner not dissimilar to that of the present-day Israeli kibbutzim, the missionaries voluntarily agreed to pool all their future earnings for the common good and to renounce engaging in any kind of private trade.

After Carey was appointed mission treasurer and Fountain the first librarian, Ward, a printer by profession, was entrusted with an old wooden printing press which Carey had bought in Calcutta for £40.[28] On March 18, 1800, Ward "set the first types with his own hands, and presented the first sheet of the New Testament to Mr. Carey."[29]

William Ward, who built the earliest and, for decades, the most important printing and publishing house in the world for books in the oriental languages, was in many ways the most interesting of the Serampore trio. Born in 1769, son of a carpenter, he brought with him to Bengal the self-acquired wisdom frequently found

[24] By 1809, Carey had translated the New Testament and Psalms into Oriya, the New Testament and the Pentateuch into Sanskrit, and the New Testament into Telegu and Punjabi, Marathi, and Gujarati.

[25] Marshman, I, 128.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 94, 75–76.

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 78–79, 124–125.

[28] Carey to Sutcliffe, April 5, 1798, Carey Letters, Box 3.

[29] Marshman, I, 129.

among the Baptists of the period, a humorless intensity, and years of journalistic experience.[30] His belief in sociopolitical equality had impelled him at least once to turn his Baptist meetinghouse in Derby into a political hall for a "democratic orator."[31] It was Ward's inflexibility—or courage—so evident in his letters and diary entries, that made him the least "Indianized" of the group.

On May 1, 1800, Joshua Marshman and his wife, Hannah, opened in Serampore two English-style boarding schools for boys and girls of European and Eurasian parentage.[32] This scheme was not so much designed as an educational program for reaching the "heathen" as an expedient way of earning desperately needed rupees.[33] Just as Carey gained a reputation as Serampore's eminent Orientalist and Ward was noted as its foremost printer and publisher, Marshman established himself as the Serampore Mission education specialist. Among the Europeans, he was the leading source of inspiration for many of the later experiments in popular and higher-level education for Bengalis, such as Serampore College and the Calcutta School Society.[34]

It is significant that, despite their lower-class origins in England, the Serampore trio—Carey, Ward, and Marshman—were well educated through their own efforts and not formally. The European Enlightenment was somehow permeating the ranks of the English common people, especially the Baptist converts being trained for the ministry. Marshman, for example, was the son of a weaver who had escaped his environment by becoming a seaman. The father's intellectual curiosity about peoples and cultures was passed on to his son. Joshua became a voracious reader very early, and developed into a schoolteacher and a scholar of repute in the classics.[35] It was this peculiar combination of communicative skills—linguistics, printing, and education—that stamped itself indelibly on the basic character of the Serampore Mission.

[30] *Ibid.*, p. 74.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 94.

[32] E. L. Wenger, "The Serampore Mission and Its Founders," *The Story of Serampore and Its College* (Serampore: Council of Serampore College, 1961), p. 6.

[33] *Ibid.*

[34] Marshman, I, 81–83. In 1816 Joshua Marshman published *Hints Relative to Native Schools, Together with the Outline of an Institution for Their Extension and Management* (Serampore: Serampore Press, 1816). This book was a manual for the Calcutta School Society.

[35] Marshman, I, 107.

At the meeting of November 23, 1800, in Calcutta between Buchanan and Carey, the reconciliation between the government of India and Serampore was made contingent upon whether Carey would offer his services to the College of Fort William.[36] Wellesley needed Serampore because of the linguistic ability of Carey and the printing ability of Ward. The missionaries were, as usual, in dire need of money. One building alone, purchased in Serampore, cost them twice their total assets.[37] "Printing," Carey wrote in a letter, "plus a regular expense will be 400 rupees a month."[38] In addition, how could they hope to evangelize India when not one of them was permitted by British officials to set foot outside of Serampore?

In Carey's letter to Fuller on November 23, in which he reported his meeting with Buchanan, he seemed to intimate that strained relations between Calcutta and Serampore were now a thing of the past. There was a rather relaxed tone about the letter which contrasted sharply with the grim cast of the epistles of a few months earlier. There was even a touch of humor: "When Marquis Wellesley first heard of a Printing Press at Serampore he supposed that some wild Democrat might have run from Calcutta and got protection under the Danish Governor."[39]

By January 30, 1801, the reconciliation must have been complete and the job offer was only a question of time. Formerly Carey had offered apologies to his superiors for his mercantile activities as an indigo foreman but now he was apologetic about his political activities: "We are on the most friendly footing with Reverend . . . Buchanan. Be perfectly easy about our meddling with politics for I assure you we are from conscience averse to anything of the kind. . . ."[40]

On April 8, 1801, Carey wrote to Sutcliffe that the brethren had decided that he should "accept the position of Bengali professor at the College."[41] Buchanan, representing Wellesley, had been most persuasive. According to Carey's own account: "I pleaded my inability to them [Brown and Buchanan] . . . . They replied that (two or three Deists or atheists excepted) there was no other per-

[36] *Supra*, p. 56.
[37] Carey to Baptist Mission, February 5, 1800, Carey Letters, Box 3.
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] Carey to Fuller, November 23, 1800, *ibid.*
[40] Carey to the Baptist Mission Society, January 30, 1801, *ibid.*
[41] Carey to Sutcliffe, April 8, 1801, *ibid.*

son in Bengal who was qualified. And as the Morals of the Students must be well looked after, it would be a very improper thing to consign [them] to the management of such persons. . . ."[42] In the same letter Carey justified his decision to accept the appointment on the basis of the Mission's chronic financial embarrassment. The Baptists in England had not yet been able or willing to assist Serampore with substantial sums of money.[43] "If I am appointed," wrote Carey, "it will bring about Rs 600 a month into the Family . . . and it will put us in our power to enlarge our plans. . . ."[44]

Writing to Sutcliffe on April 13, Carey displayed a certain enthusiasm when he announced:

> The Business of the Professorship is settled. . . . I was appointed by his Excellency [Wellesley] in the Character of Missionary, or in conjunction with the Mission so that our Friends in England may now be perfectly at ease respecting the safety of the Mission. This College will be on so extensive a scale as that I am credibly informed that the expense of it equals that of the whole University of Cambridge. . . .[45]

The news was conveyed with great emotion also because of its obvious implications for the Baptist mission: "The New Testament would be introduced in College, it [i.e., Carey's joining the faculty] would make the Mission respectable. . . . It would spread books into the whole Country. . . . It would open Calcutta to preaching and would put a number of respectable Hindoos under my direction as *Moonchis*. . . ."[46]

Carey's connection with Wellesley proved to be useful to the Mission almost immediately. In a ramification of the European war between England and France (in which the Danish had become implicated on the French side in 1800), British troops occupied Serampore on May 8, 1801. The offer of protection by the Danish crown proved to be a paper pledge. J. C. Marshman's authentic account of the event and its implications are worth noting:

> The missionaries were thus deprived of the friendly protection of the Crown of Denmark, and were completely within the power of those who, but for that protection, would have expelled them from the country eighteen months before. It was natural for them

[42] *Ibid.*
[43] *Ibid.*
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] Carey to Sutcliffe, April 13, 1801, *ibid.*
[46] *Ibid.*

> to entertain some feelings of disquietude in the new position in which they now stood; but Lord Wellesley no longer regarded their missionary enterprise with alarm, and they were therefore safe. Nor did they fail to contrast, with feelings of the deepest gratitude to God, the security they now enjoyed, with the danger to which they would have been exposed if the settlement had been captured by the English at an earlier period. During the fourteen months in which the town remained in the hands of British officers, the missionaries were permitted to prosecute their labours without interruption.[47]

The importance of this event cannot be overstressed, following as it does the Carey-Wellesley pact on behalf of the College of Fort William. Wellesley's act of friendliness to the missionaries constituted the first *de facto* acceptance by the Indian government of missionary activity in India.

It was the College of Fort William that first made Serampore prosperous, allowing the already existing institutional rudiments to mature fully. As early as January 21, 1802, Carey's letters to England began to convey an optimistic excitement that had been lacking in his previous letters:

> The Society is expanding. . . . We have purchased 13½ bighas of Land in Serampore for 10,000 Rupees and so the Society now has two of the Best Houses in Serampore. . . . The Press is humming. . . . My *Bengali Grammar* and *Colloquies* and Bashoo's *History* . . . these are sold off. The Government took 100 copies of each for the College. We are printing the *Hitopodesha* from Sanscrit into Bengali and the *Mahabharat*. . . .[48]

In a letter of February 27, 1804, Carey wrote Fuller that the Mission operations were developing beyond any previous expectations.[49] "We are now in a position for expansion," Carey added, "and will set up subordinate stations for the Mission (100 miles from each other."[50] He was also pleased to report that the government had just paid him 6,400 rupees (£880) in advance for his recently completed *Sanskrit Grammar*.[51]

The years 1805 and 1806 were perhaps the happiest of Carey's life. Carey's letter to Fuller dated December 10, 1805, commenced

[47] Marshman, I, 150.
[48] Carey to Fuller, January 21, 1802, Carey Letters, Box 3.
[49] Carey to Fuller, February 27, 1804, *ibid.*
[50] *Ibid.*
[51] *Ibid.*

with the now-familiar elation: "This has been the most prosperous year the Mission has yet seen. . . . We are in good terms with the Government. . . . I had breakfast with the Deputy Governor General, Sir George Barlow yesterday and his attitude was most cordial. . . ."[52] The truly interesting part of this letter, however, dealt with Carey's first admission of familiarity with the Asiatic Society elite. The Serampore Baptists seemed well on the way toward achieving a certain social equality or respectability. This was evident in Carey's enthusiasm about a new project:

> The College and the Asiatic Society have agreed to allow us three hundred Rupees a Month to translate and publish the Sangskrit Writings of the Hindoos, the profits of the Sale to be ours. Sir J. Anstruther has very kindly addressed a Letter to learned Bodies [in India] to recommend the Work. He told me last Friday that he would also address the Court of Directors on the same subject. . . .[53]

Growing respectability and affluence apparently did not deflect the missionaries from the original purpose of their charter. Carey's salary of 6,000 rupees a year was almost entirely surrendered to the common Mission fund.[54] The Serampore Press, which was contracted to do virtually all the college printing, was spending 37,966 rupees per year for printing expenses.[55] In 1805, though Ward was able to move into "more commodious premises"[56] and was managing at least three presses constantly turning out works in "seven major and current Indian languages,"[57] he was still drawing £20 a year for personal expenses as he had done in 1801.[58]

Carey's letters to England in 1806 not only reflected continued enthusiasm and optimism for the success of the Mission but also indicated that he devoted much of his time to Orientalist projects for both the college and the Asiatic Society. On January 1, 1806, he wrote that college duties were all-consuming: "My whole time is now occupied in translating and preparing copy for the press."[59]

[52] Carey to Fuller, December 10, 1805, Carey Letters, Box 3.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] *Serampore Letters, 1800–16*, ed. M. William (London: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1892), p. 17.
[55] Carey to Baptist Society, September 25, 1804, Carey Letters, Box 3.
[56] Khan, p. 240.
[57] *Ibid.*, p. 231.
[58] Williams, p. 17.
[59] William Carey to the Baptist Mission Society, 1794–1830, Carey Letters, PA III, 222.

A month later he admitted in a letter to Morris that "the translation of the *Ramayana* occupies all the time I can spare; it is esteemed the first poem that ever was written by the Hindoos."[60] On March 14 he reported to Fuller: "I hope our translations of the Ramayana will serve the Mission as it respects temporal supplies. We have 300 Rupees a month for it besides the profits issuing from the sale. The Governor General has subscribed for three copies and the Judges of the Supreme Court for three more. The translation so occupies my time that I have little leisure for writing."[61]

During the next few years, Serampore Mission continued to prosper from its association with Fort William. The Mission Press was still the chief instrument for college publications even though new printing establishments were developing—also with college support—and the atmosphere was growing more competitive. It was difficult, however, for any printing establishment to match Ward's inventiveness. Even as early as 1807, his press had four fonts of Indian type: Devanagari, Bengali, Oriya, and Marathi.[62] When a fire destroyed most of Ward's printing shop in 1812, fourteen fonts in the Eastern languages and the manuscript version of a polyglot dictionary (containing words of every known oriental tongue) were among the missionaries' impressive achievements in the communicative arts that perished.[63]

Though Carey muffled the Press as a medium for missionary zeal between 1808 and 1813, he promoted the spread of missionary activity in his usual unobtrusive way. It is noteworthy that during the same years in which Wilberforce was gradually building up public support in England for opening the official gates to the mission movement in India, Carey had already won the governor-general's backing in doing precisely the same thing. In 1810 when William Ward reviewed Serampore's progress in its first ten years of spreading the Gospel he observed:

> They had succeeded in settling four stations in Bengal; they had sent a missionary to Patna, and planted stations on the borders of Orissa and Bootan, and in Burmah; the number of members in church fellowship exceeded two hundred; they had obtained a footing in Calcutta, where a chapel had been erected at a cost of

[60] Carey to Morris, February 7, 1806, Carey Letters, PA III, 161.
[61] Carey to Fuller, March 14, 1806, Carey Letters, not numbered.
[62] Khan, p. 252.
[63] Carey to Sutcliffe, July 24, 1812, Carey Letters.

more than 3,000 Rupees, and a large church and congregation collected; the Scriptures had been printed, in whole or in part, in six languages, and translations had been commenced in six others.[64]

Also in 1810, in a note to Minto, Carey proposed sending missionaries to the Punjab, and in fact he had already published a grammar in Punjabi for the college. Minto refused the request[65] but nevertheless allowed mission stations to be located in Agra and Delhi.[66] Unfortunately, Chamberlain, the missionary in Agra, encountered so much hostility there from the military personnel that he was forced to leave.[67]

Carey's letters home expressed no feeling of incongruity between his Orientalist activities and his Christian ones. From 1808 onward, especially when he was informed by Fuller of the growing polarization of cultural positions in England between Orientalists and Evangelicals, Carey's references to his Fort William activities seem to have been reported with judicious care.

However well he might have concealed the full extent of his nonmissionary activities as an Orientalist professor, Carey could not dissimulate the enthusiasm he felt for this aspect of his life's work. Though in a letter of 1810 he dismissed John Leyden as a man "totally destitute of Religion,"[68] it was impossible for him not to admire this eminent linguist who had "a faculty of acquiring languages exceeding that of any person with whom I am acquainted. . . ."[69] Such references by Carey reflected the thoughts of a scholar entranced with his subject matter for its own sake. On July 24, 1812, he wrote Sutcliffe: "I have another scheme in my head, for the purpose of insuring the gradual perfection of the translations. This is an Unusual Dictionary of Oriental Languages derived from Sanskrit. . . . I will give the etymology and synonyms of the different languages derived from Sanskrit with equivalent Greek and Hebrew and perhaps the Arabic. This work will be great and it is doubtful whether I will live to compleat it."[70]

In Carey's mind, in fact, there was little contradiction between his Orientalist activities and those related to carrying out the ob-

[64] Marshman, I, 421–422.
[65] Khan, bibliographical section.
[66] Marshman, I, 431.
[67] *Ibid.*, p. 481.
[68] Carey to Sutcliffe, May 11, 1810, Carey Letters.
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] Carey to Sutcliffe, July 24, 1812, Carey Letters.

jectives of the Mission charter. There is no evidence to suggest that the missionaries at Serampore were hypocritical, compromising, or primarily concerned with their own self-interest. Carey's missionary philosophy had developed gradually and pragmatically according to circumstances. His close relationships with Orientalists, civil servants, Anglican clergymen, Bengali Brahmans and others demonstrated his realistic policy of advancing the Christian cause by reconciling differences rather than by accentuating them. If Carey had a philosophy of the Christian mission, it was flexibly accommodating. The absence of a dogmatic spirit in Carey's policy of accommodating Christian values and practices within the indigenous civilization may be in large part explained by his personal and cultural transformation while living in Bengal. He had, as he in fact admitted as early as 1804, become "Indianized":

> I now an old man have lived for a long series of years among the Hindoos. . . . Their Language is nearly as familiar to me as my own. This close intercourse with the Natives for so long a period and in different parts of our Empire, has afforded me opportunities of information not inferior to those which have hitherto been presented to any other person. I may say indeed that their manners, customs, habits and sentiments are as obvious to me, as if I was myself a native. . . .[71]

[71] *Primitiae Orientales* (Calcutta: Company Press, 1804), pp. 117–118.

VI

The College as a Center for Linguistic Modernization and Literary Revival

When the College of Fort William opened its classroom doors in 1800 for the first lectures, it had no library and its staff and students discovered that they had no means for either printing or publishing oriental materials basic to the curriculum. There were only a few worn Urdu textbooks used previously by Gilchrist at his seminary. It was this sudden and desperate realization that greatly contributed to an early emphasis on Orientalism at the college. The Orientalist found himself the man of the hour. His familiarity with ancient history and comparative culture seemed also to qualify him as a philologist able to systematize alien languages, Romanize their alphabets, and publish books in them.

In the race for patronage benefits, John Gilchrist maintained a commanding lead between 1800 and 1804, primarily because of the acknowledged importance of Urdu. In 1801 Gilchrist was asked by the College Council not only to prepare and publish textbooks for his students but to "develop a complete system of Hindoostance Philology."[1] He replied that the college would have to pay him at least an additional 1,000 rupees annually for the laborious work required in philological research.[2] He also pointed out that printing expenses in 1801 were high and that the government already owed him 63,000 rupees for previous linguistic research.[3]

[1] PCFW, DLIX (January 12, 1802), 47–50.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*

Gilchrist submitted a plan to the Council in January, 1802, in which he stated his conditions for devoting all his time and energy to developing the Urdu program according to Wellesley's ideals.[4] He would require his own printing press; salary increases for his Asian associates at the college; the purchase by the college of a guaranteed number of his publications so that a marginal profit would be assured; and freedom "to sell such works wherever I please and to enjoy every right and privilege as an author in the utmost acceptation of that term."[5] Expressing what may have been a veiled threat, Gilchrist added, "the Hindoostanee is in fact still in its embryo state and never can grow to maturity if fettered with too rigid economy. . . ."[6] The government agreed to all his conditions.

In 1802 Gilchrist launched the Hindoostanee Press, which not only earned him and his successors handsome profits but played an important role in the early history of printing and publishing in India. In this same year he raised the salaries of his *munshis* and increased their number from 2 to 20.[7]

By 1803 Gilchrist had completed two important works, the polyglot translation of *Aesop's Fables* and the translation from Persian of the *Gulistan*. The Council paid him 5,000 rupees for the latter work, which sold for 32 rupees per copy.[8] Other books were published regularly and the college bought at least 100 copies of each publication. On June 27, 1803, Gilchrist reported the progress of his "typographic reformation" of Urdu.[9] He had introduced into oriental printing the European principles of punctuation, word separation, and "joining the letters of each vocable as much as possible."[10] Expensive new styles of type had been created by a carefully chosen "establishment of oriental compositors." He also reported progress in giving every "character of the Persian, Arabic, and Nagree Alphabets" an equivalent in the Roman alphabet.[11] After requesting an additional 1,000 rupees a year to continue his research, he predicted that Urdu was well on its way toward becoming a great language. Gilchrist wrote enthusiastically:

[4] *Ibid.*
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 48.
[6] *Ibid.*
[7] *Ibid.* (February 19, 1802), pp. 60–61.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *Ibid.* (June 27, 1803), pp. 255–256.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 255.
[11] *Primitiae Orientales* (1804), p. xxxix.

> I shall engage soon to form such a body of useful and entertaining literature in that language as will ultimately raise it to that estimation among the natives which it would many years ago have attained among an enlightened and energetic people. . . . May not we then reason thus from analogy, that the Hindoostanee will ascend as high on the Indian scale . . . as the English has done in a similar predicament in our own country. . . .[12]

In August, 1803, the Urdu department submitted its list of works completed up to that date, with miscellaneous remarks by Gilchrist. Of the forty-four books on that list, most were translations of Persian and Arabic classics and only a few were original compositions.[13] The Asians in the department were almost all Muslims and, judging from later obituary notices and pension applications, they were not Bengalis. Only one Hindu, Tarinicharan Mitra, a Bengali from Calcutta, was listed among the Asian authors.[14]

One of the best of these works, the *Oriental Fabulist* (1803) was a translation of Aesop and other ancient "fabulists" into Urdu, Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit, Bengali, and English. Gilchrist's preface is significant historically for showing understanding of the range of linguistic problems that faced the self-styled "humanist" professors of the College of Fort William. He began by describing the enormous difficulty that all foreigners had experienced in distinguishing between the Islamic languages of Urdu, Persian, and Arabic[15] and the languages of Sanskrit, Bengali, and Hindi.[16] He hoped that his *Oriental Fabulist* would help establish the precise similarities and differences between the Muslim and Hindu tongues. According to Gilchrist, the primary point of departure from other oriental translators was his system of transliterating oriental languages into Romanized form.[17] For him, Romanizing these exotic languages was an effective technique for teaching them to civil servants, but he warned that any such system must have some defects because of the multiplicity of oriental sounds.[18]

Gilchrist praised Wellesley for establishing the College of Fort William, where civil servants were introduced to Oriental culture by becoming "proficient in several Oriental tongues."[19] The cul-

[12] PCFW, DLIX (June 27, 1803), 256.
[13] *Ibid.* (August 29, 1803), pp. 274–277.
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] Gilchrist, *Oriental Fabulist*, p. ii.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. iii.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. ix.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. x.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. xxxv.

tivation of Urdu went far beyond mere philological interest. "The translation of these Fables," he wrote, "has now diffused a taste among the Hindoostanees for such exercises, which may yet be attended with the most beneficial consequences on the literature of India. . . ."[20] He was boundlessly optimistic about the role that Wellesley's college would play in the approaching cultural revival: "A prophet is not required to predict that in a few years more, the Orient gleam of learning in the days of Hastings and Jones will be totally eclipsed by that precious dawn in the Eastern lore apparent now, and which will then break forth with meridian splendour, to promote and confirm the happiness and prosperity of British India. . . ."[21]

Unfortunately for Gilchrist, his position in the institution promoting a glorious revival in the East became more and more precarious by the end of 1803. His letters to the Council were increasingly filled with descriptions of new projects, demands for more money, and resentful, violent language in referring to the Council's growing tendency to procrastinate. In February, 1804, he confessed that bad health made it necessary for him to return to England that year. Gilchrist mentioned casually an accumulated personal debt, and in view of his years of service he requested help from the Council in paying this debt. The Council ignored the request, recorded his resignation, but nevertheless "eulogized his zeal and ability." Months later Gilchrist boarded a ship for England and passed quietly from the Calcutta scene forever.

When Gilchrist left Fort William, he was replaced by William Hunter, also a Scot. Having arrived in India in 1781, at the age of twenty-six, Hunter, like Gilchrist, served as a surgeon who probably learned Urdu as a spoken language before studying it systematically.

Hunter did not prove a productive linguist in his adopted Indian language. His first appeal for patronage was in 1805, when he expressed interest in researching the "Pathan,"[22] a new language of the northwest. He received 1,200 rupees[23] for the project, but it seems unlikely that such a book was ever published. William Carey later occupied himself with this and other northern languages when the possibility of missionary expansion to that part of India became

[20] *Ibid.*, p. xv.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. xxxv.
[22] PCFW, DLIX (April 22, 1805), 402
[23] *Ibid.*, DLX (March 12, 1806), 91.

evident.[24] Hunter's only published work in Urdu, an *Hindustani-English Dictionary* in two volumes,[25] appeared in 1809.

On the other hand, Hunter was an effective administrator and excellent librarian. He served as secretary of both the Asiatic Society and the College of Fort William. Under his direction the college library expanded greatly, Asian assistant librarians were hired, and the practice of exchanging books with European universities was begun.[26]

When John Leyden was hired as Hunter's assistant, it seemed as if the Hindustani Department was rapidly becoming a monopoly of Company surgeons from Scotland. John Leyden, the poor Scot born in the hut of a border shepherd in 1775,[27] and a self-taught poetic genius befriended by Walter Scott, came to Madras as a Company surgeon in 1803. When Lord Minto, also a Scotsman and an admirer of Leyden's poetry, was named governor-general in 1807, he immediately transferred Leyden to Calcutta and arranged an appointment for him as assistant Urdu professor under Hunter.[28] Leyden quickly became Hunter's protégé and was made deputy secretary of both the Asiatic Society and the college. This relationship ended tragically, for both men died of disease while serving as Minto's interpreters in Java.[29]

The Persian department seems to have considered itself the most elite circle of the college. During these early years it was the only department with more than one salaried European professor. Neil B. Edmonstone, William Kirkpatrick, and Francis Gladwin originally shared the teaching load. Gradually two assistant professors, Mathew Lumsden and Charles Stewart (the future first historian of Bengal), began in 1803 to assume most of the departmental responsibilities.[30] However, until Lumsden's request on May 16, 1803, to work on a Persian grammar, no significant linguistic innovations in Persian were attempted nor was there evidence of a single distinguished original work at the college in that language.[31]

[24] Marshman, I, 429.
[25] PCFW, DLXI (March 25, 1809), 4.
[26] *Ibid.* (December 13, 1810), 426.
[27] M. R. Dobie, "Dr. John Leyden and Sir William Burroughs," *Bengal Past and Present*, LII (December, 1936), 67.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 68.
[29] LASB MP, II (December 11, 1811), 48.
[30] Roebuck, Appendix, p. 53.
[31] PCFW, DLIX (May 16, 1803), 248–249.

On September 20, 1805, Lumsden presented to the Council the Department's first plan for improving existing Persian typography and for establishing a printing press.[32] With Council encouragement he hoped to recruit the "best artists . . . in Calcutta under the direction of the Persian Writing Master Shykh Kulb Alee. . . ."[33] Lumsden, as in the case of the other Orientalists, felt compelled to attribute to his project a deeper cultural significance. This project would, he wrote, "aid the more general diffusion of Persian literature by introducing the use of printed books among the natives of India."[34] If his plan were accepted, he predicted that:

> The acquisition of the Arabic and Persian tongues both to Europeans and Natives will be greatly facilitated by the encouragement given to the art of printing in this country, and the adoption of that art by the Natives of India will doubtless ensure the preservation as well as the general circulation of many valuable works in either language that are now in danger of being lost.[35]

Two months later Lumsden was given the twin post of full professor in Arabic and Persian.[36]

Between 1806 and 1814, Mathew Lumsden directed a newly combined Persian-Arabic Department—still the largest, most favored, and best endowed of all departments. In 1813, the college secretary prepared a list of works since 1800 and (if known) the number of each that were printed. Of a total of 264,106 rupees expended, the Persian-Arabic department had received approximately 167,000 rupees, or roughly two-thirds.[37] Lumsden, apparently a competent, unassuming Orientalist and part of the Calcutta "Persian elite," was rewarded in 1812 with the post of Calcutta Madrassa Secretary in recognition of his prolific output of publications on Islamic studies.

The Arabic Department, before being joined with the Persian in 1806, was directed by John Baillie. Various small but useful works were crudely printed: principles of Arabic grammar and vocabulary, digests of the medieval Arabic philosophers, and several editions of the Koran.[38] Even though the government tried to

[32] *Ibid.* (September 27, 1805), pp. 45–46.
[33] *Ibid.*, p. 46.
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid.* (November 18, 1805), p. 71.
[37] *Ibid.*, DLXII (April 1, 1813), 381–389.
[38] *Primitiae Orientales* (1803), pp. xlvi–liv.

encourage students to take Arabic because of its importance in Muslim law, Baillie had no more than six students in his class at any time. He seems to have been greatly attracted to Arabic culture and to have inspired his students—if their declamations can be considered a valid gauge of their feelings. In spite of his small teaching load, Baillie was among the highest-paid faculty members, receiving 2,600 rupees a month.[39] Gilchrist (who was earning only 1,500 rupees) pointed out this fact in an aggressively worded letter written on his own behalf.[40]

Colebrooke's association with the College of Fort William seems to have aided him considerably as a scholar. The institutional environment of the College of Fort William, with its assemblage of Asian and European scholars, library of oriental manuscripts, publishing facilities, and policy of liberal patronage, seems to have had a profound influence on him in at least three different ways.

To begin with, the competitive college atmosphere, in which patronage benefits were sought after by Europeans representing linguistic and cultural groups, forced Colebrooke to identify himself completely with Sanskrit, its derivative vernaculars, and Hinduism. This helps not only to explain his close relationship with William Carey but also his determined effort to promote Sanskritic and Hindu studies in the face of the powerful Persian-Urdu group. Secondly, the Wellesley-inspired program of defining the cultures of India for student benefit inspired all its faculty, including Colebrooke, to describe consciously and deliberately India's cultural configurations. All of Colebrooke's writings during his period of college association may be characterized as having a textbook quality natural to the output of a teacher who is organizing, simplifying, and generalizing—in his case on the Hindu great tradition. Finally, the great emphasis at the college on philology, which led every language department to contribute at least one grammar and one dictionary between 1801 and 1805, forced Colebrooke to do likewise. He applied the same methods of intensive study to language and literature that he had once devoted to Hindu law.

On January 7, 1801, Colebrooke delivered his first paper before the members of the Asiatic Society on "The Sanscrit and Prakrit Languages."[41] This was not only the first reliable scholarly study

[39] PCFW, DLIX (June 15, 1803), 257–260.
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] LASB MP, II (January 7, 1801), 1.

dealing with Hindu languages but also the first useful description and analysis of the then contemporary Hindu vernaculars. Colebrooke's research convinced him that William Jones's original speculation on the Hindu languages was inaccurate and misleading. Jones, for example, believed that languages such as Hindi preceded Sanskrit whereas Colebrooke contended that the contrary was true. He reasoned that: "Progress has been from languages rich in inflections, to dialects simple in their structure. In modern idioms, auxiliary verbs and appendant particles supply the place of numerous inflections of the root: it may, for this reason be doubted, whether the present structure of Hindi be not a modern refinement."[42] Colebrooke was probably the first European to recognize that Hindi had existed prior to and separate from the Persianized Urdu.[43]

Although Colebrooke's books during the next few years were written chiefly for the College of Fort William students, they were, according to Max Müller, used also by German scholars increasingly interested in Indian scholarship.[44] Colebrooke's *Hitopadesha* (1804), done with Carey's assistance, was typical of the new kind of scholarship at Fort William made possible by available resources concentrated in a single place for effective use. Colebrooke based this translation on the collation of six manuscripts and therefore improved the earlier, imperfect translation of Jones and Wilkins.[45] Furthermore, Colebrooke's *Hitopadesha* constituted the first attempt to employ the press in multiplying copies of a Sanskrit work with a highly perfected Devanagari syllabary. In 1808 he completed for the college a *Sanscrit Dictionary* which was actually a popular indigenous lexicographical work, the *Amara Kosha*, adapted for student use.[46] His method was to retain the essence of the original while making it more comprehensible to the students by inserting marginal notes.

In 1810 Colebrooke published *The Translation of Two Treatises on the Hindu Law of Inheritance*. This work was important because it demonstrated how Europeans were able to pull together the fragments of a chaotic and contradictory Hindu legal system

[42] Colebrooke, "On the Sanscrit and Prakrit Languages," *Miscellaneous Essays*, II, 24.
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[44] Müller, p. 230.
[45] Colebrooke, *Hitopadesha* (Serampore: Mission Press, 1804).
[46] Colebrooke, *Sanskrit Dictionary* (Serampore: Mission Press, 1808).

and reconstruct it along modern lines. The *Two Treatises* was designed to assist Fort William graduates expecting to serve as judicial officers in Bengal. William Jones and his chief pundit, Tarkapanchanan, had collaborated on earlier translations, but Colebrooke found them vague, poorly digested compilations without useful analysis.[47] The College of Fort William was training judicial officers for Bengali stations, and it was necessary for Colebrooke to determine which laws were then actually operative in Bengal. Colebrooke concluded that there was no single textual law of inheritance for all of India.[48] He had discovered, in fact, that only one treatise, the *Mitākṣharā*, might be said to have been in general use in parts of southern India and Benares.[49] He reported that "the Bengal school alone having taken for its guide" Jimutavabava's treatise is, "on almost every disputed point, opposite in doctrine to the *Mitākṣharā* and has no deference for its authority."[50] Colebrooke's research on legal diversity thus brought to light an important category of cultural differences between the regions of India.

By 1804, Colebrooke had risen quickly in the administrative-judicial hierarchy. He preferred research to teaching, and he might have believed that the cultivation of Sanskrit studies at the college required a man with a greater gift for organization than he possessed and with the enthusiasm to convert others to a cause. For a man active in local politics and who, in 1807, would enter the Supreme Council of Government, the post of Sanskrit professor was probably no longer attractive. Colebrooke chose and groomed William Carey to be his successor.

Between 1804 and 1806 Carey achieved full respectability and equality with his colleagues. On September 29, 1804, William Carey stood in Colebrooke's place at the yearly disputation in the Government House, prepared to deliver a speech in Sanskrit. Wellesley introduced him in the following words:

> Sanskrit Learning, say the Brahmans, is like an extensive forest, abounding with a great variety of beautiful foliage, splendid blossoms and delicious fruits; but surrounded by a strong and thorny

[47] See the Preface to the Translations reprinted in Colebrooke, *Miscellaneous Essays* (1837), pp. 477–478.
[48] *Ibid.*, p. 479.
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 480.

> fence, which prevents those who are desirous of plucking its fruits, or flowers, from entering in.
>
> The learned Jones, Wilkins and others, broke down the opposing fence in several places; but by the College of Fort William, a highway has been made into the midst of the wood; and you, Sir, have entered thereby.[51]

Carey's speech was a fine piece of oratory, both rhetorically impressive and personally revealing. It was the discourse of a man being given the opportunity to fill the shoes of the Orientalist giants who preceded him. But the significance of the occasion transcended that of his personal advancement. Everyone knew that the college was in trouble with the Directors in London. Since Wellesley was to be recalled in a few months' time, this proved to be his last disputation. The best moments in Carey's speech were in praise of the College of Fort William, which had done so much for his fellow missionaries at Serampore and for himself. He said emotionally:

> The rising importance of our Collegiate Institution has never been more clearly demonstrated than on the present occasion; and thousands of the learned in distant nations will exult in this triumph of Literature.
>
> The Coloquial Hindoostanee, the classic Persian, the commercial Bengalee, the learned Arabic, and the primaeval Shanscrit, are spoken fluently, after having been studied gramatically by English youths. Did ever any University in Europe, or any literary Institution in any other age or country exhibit a scene so interesting as this?[52]

Near the end of his speech, Carey seemed to imply that the college might be abolished but that the achievements of the institution could not be undone easily:

> Were the Institution to cease from this moment, its salutary effects would yet remain. Good has been done, which cannot be undone. Sources of useful knowledge, moral instruction, and political utility, have been opened to the Natives of India which can never be closed; and their civil improvement, like the gradual civilization of our own country, will advance in progression, for ages to come.[53]

On November 6, 1805, William Carey was proposed as a mem-

[51] *Primitiae Orientales* (1804), p. 114.
[52] *Ibid.*, p. 115.
[53] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

ber of the Asiatic Society,[54] and he was elected by unanimous vote on January 8, 1806.[55] On July 30 of that year, Colebrooke submitted to the college his letter of resignation as Sanskrit professor and expressed his gratitude at having been able to "push the College along in its infancy."[56] The task of cultivating Sanskrit "and of completing the publications requisite to facilitate the Study of the Sanskrit language may now devolve on Mr. Carey. . . ." Several months later Carey became a full professor, at twice his former salary.[57] The Baptist missionary, son of a peasant and raised with little formal schooling, emerged after years of deprivation and humiliation as an eminent Orientalist in the tradition of the legendary Sir William Jones.

As if to confirm his new height of academic respectability, Carey published in 1806 the first systematic Sanskrit grammar, which H. H. Wilson later called "a singular monument of industrious application."[58] Carey divided the work into five books. The first dealt with the modification of Sanskrit letters when joined or juxtaposed. The second concerned itself with the rules of declinable and undeclinable words. In the third book Sanskrit verbs were conjugated and then described in their derivative function. Carey treated nouns in the next book and demonstrated the formation of derivative words and compounds. The final book was devoted to syntax and to exercises for students. In the appendix, Carey made one of his most important contributions: the compilation of an exhaustive alphabetical list of Sanskrit roots.

Carey's *Grammar*, with its authentic Devanagri script, was a pioneering achievement of its kind and was one of the two most influential models for later philologists in Europe. At the first meeting of the British Philological Society, H. H. Wilson regretted that

> no note was taken of the grammatical labours of Englishmen residing in the East, and that they found their way slowly and with difficulty even to the few who stood in need of their aid and longed for their appearance. A striking instance of this occurs in the case of the late Professor Chezy who until 1810 had not heard

[54] LASB MP, II (November 6, 1805), 21.
[55] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[56] PCFW, DLX (July 30, 1806), 161–162.
[57] Carey to Ryland, January 20, 1807, Carey Letters, not numbered.
[58] Wilson, "Notice of European Grammars and Lexicons of the Sanskrit Language," *Essays Analytical, Critical, and Philological*, III, 262–263.

> of the existence of Carey's "Sanskrit Grammar." In the preface to his excellent edition and translation of the "Sakuntala" he has described, in an animated and interesting tone, the wretched means and unremitting application by which he acquired his first knowledge of Sanskrit, and the delight with which he welcomed the bulky volume of Carey, and the more elegant and available grammar of Wilkins which had been published in London at the end of 1808.[59]

Carey's devotion to the Bengali language has been the theme of at least a dozen excellent articles and books by Bengali scholars.[60] Carey chose Bengali not for its inherent beauty but for its potential usefulness as the most effective medium for reaching the masses of Bengal. In 1795, after preliminary observations on Bengali culture, Carey wrote of the Bengali people: "They are very avaricious and deceitful, and cruelty to Animals and to each other are too common evils. Their servility is extreme and their ignorance also, except a very few Learned Men among them. They know nothing of Geography or Astronomy; but are much addicted to Astrology."[61]

Carey's letters of the 1790's were unflattering in references to Bengalis. The superstition, ignorance, and degradation that Carey found so widespread in Bengal convinced him all the more that "Bengal needed Christ desperately." He wanted to comprehend Bengali culture deeply, but in order to do so he required fluency in their language. Unfortunately he was not enjoying great success acquiring it. On August 13, 1795, he wrote:

> One great difficulty in speaking to the Bengali people arises from the extreme ignorance of the Common people who are not able to understand one of their own countrymen who speaks the Language well (without considerable difficulty). They have a confined Dialect composed of very few Words which They work about and make them mean almost everything. . . .[62]

When the college hired Carey in 1801 as head of the Bengali department, every available kind of financial, technological, and human resource was put at his disposal. With an unlimited budget

[59] *Ibid.*, pp. 272–273.

[60] Among the best scholars on the College of Fort William contribution to Bengali literature are Brajendranath Banerji, S. K. De, and Sajana Kanta Das.

[61] Carey to Arnold, March 13, 1795, Carey Letters, Box 3.

[62] Carey to the Society, August 13, 1795, *ibid.*

and a capable staff of Brahman pundits, Carey found himself in a most enviable position. His dream of creating a cadre of cultural intermediaries who would disclose to him the secrets of indigenous culture while also being inducted to disseminate Christianity to their own countrymen seemed closer to realization.[63]

Carey's first textbook (which would go through five editions in the first half of the nineteenth century) was the *Bengali Grammar*, completed in 1801.[64] The first edition was a near-replica of the Halhed work (1778), because Carey had just been hired as an instructor and was hard-pressed to produce a textbook quickly. The second edition, published at Serampore in 1805, was clearly a more original effort. Carey, a self-taught linguist, had by now matured considerably as a philologist. Halhed's conjectures on Bengali syntax were formulated into rules by Carey, who finally fixed "the chaotic and dialectal variety of the vernacular into definite forms."[65]

Also in 1801, Carey helped to edit and compose a reader for the Bengali students called the *Kathopakathan* or *Dialogues*. The book has since been carefully analyzed for its literary value by Bengali scholars. S. K. De has gone farther, treating the work as a social document depicting the various castes and classes of eighteenth-century rural Bengal.[66] The *Kathopakathan* is really much more than that. It was the first book by a European that did not concern itself with Hindu high culture. For the first time the idiomatic language, manners, and customs of merchants, fishermen, women, beggars, day-laborers, and other common folk were given the dignity of "minute and sympathetic observation."[67] It would not be far-fetched to call Carey, as a result of this work alone, India's first cultural anthropologist.

Equally important, Carey, through the *Dialogues*, was the first European to appreciate fully the special qualities of one Indian regional culture as against another and to describe fully the diversity of the Bengali tradition. He accomplished this chiefly through a faithful reproduction of speech patterns. For example, the slang of Bengali fishermen belongs only to them, while the quarrels of

[63] Carey knew Basu in Malda, was assisted by him in early Biblical translations, and attempted—without success—to convert him to Christianity.

[64] Carey, *A Grammar of the Bengalee Language* (Serampore Mission Press, 1801).

[65] De, pp. 122–123.

[66] *Ibid.*, pp. 123–124.

[67] *Ibid.*

women reflect the idiosyncratic vituperativeness of Bengali women. The work, though, was too authentic to be that of a foreigner. It was, as Carey himself admitted, a composition by the "natives" themselves in order to portray precisely the ways and attitudes of the people through their speech.[68] Carey wrote, "I believe the imitation to be so exact that they will not only assist the student but furnish a considerable idea of the domestic economy of the country."[69]

The *Dialogues* reveal a people whose degree of linguistic sophistication and cultural refinement depended largely upon social status and not upon economic well-being. Carey's Brahmans were priests who were respected for their sacred knowledge but who lived no differently from most people in the villages. The pundits and *munshis* were more eclectic in their choice of linguistic expression but no less bound to their caste duties.[70] In some cases, Carey may have encouraged stereotypes instead of the book's generally realistic depiction. His Bengali women, for example, were identified as low caste through the vulgarities so common in their speech, whereas higher-caste women possessed a vocabulary incorporating refinement as well as vulgarity.[71] In essence, Carey sought to recapture a Bengali folk tradition that existed prior to or apart from the influence of Calcutta. It is significant that during the next five decades, whenever Bengalis themselves depicted life in a socially realistic manner, they turned their backs on Carey's area of perception, rural Bengal, and described the new social classes living in a new cultural milieu in urbanized Calcutta.[72]

[68] *Kathopakathan*, comp. W. Carey (rev. ed.; Calcutta: Ranjan Publishing House, 1943), p. xxxii.

[69] *Ibid.*

[70] *Ibid.*, pp. 7–9, 25–26, 36–41, 46–48.

[71] *Ibid.*, pp. 28–30, 35, 36, 41–44.

[72] See for example, B. Bandyopādhyāy's *Kalikātā kamalālay* (1823) and *Naba-bābu bilās* (1825). Both were social satires on Calcutta Bengalis. New editions of these works have been published by S. K. Das (Calcutta: Ranjan Publishing House, 1937).

VII

The Students at the College: Indianization and Intellectual Development

The physical establishment of a college, the recruitment of a faculty, the utilization of subsidiary institutions, and the publication of textbooks—all impressive in themselves—were but means to the end of producing a culturally sympathetic and responsive class of public servants. The College of Fort William, as Wellesley conceived it, had as its aim to extend and routinize the Hastings-derived Orientalist credo: to rule effectively, one must love India; to love India, one must communicate with her people; to communicate with her people, one must acquire her languages.

Considering the period and the circumstances, Wellesley's educational program was a unique experiment in the history of European colonialism. The youths who left London expecting to be sent immediately into the jungle districts of Bengal to mirror their predecessors' lives as nabobs were thrust instead into classrooms where veteran Orientalists strove to arouse in them a curiosity about their new environment and to offer them the means of communicating with its inhabitants. Those classes were attended during the early years by Charles Metcalfe, William B. Bayley, William B. Martin, William W. Bird, John Digby, Thomas Fortesque, and many others. Most of them—especially those from Scotland—had had six or seven years of formal education that enabled them "to organize data, to formulate policies on the basis of written reports and to prepare memoranda."[1] A few, notably Bayley and Metcalfe,

[1] Embree, p. 22.

were Eton graduates with a formal education that went beyond the prevailing clerical type.[2]

Students were required to attend lectures every weekday. Courses were conducted in two establishments, the European and the Oriental, but the paucity of available manpower made it necessary for Orientalists to teach Western subjects as well. The only non-Orientalists in the European establishment were Buchanan, who taught Greek, Latin, and English classics, and Dinwiddie, who was responsible for mathematics and the natural sciences.

One explanation for the apparent panicky confusion at the college in its infant years was the pressing need first to organize the alien languages of India in a way that would make them comprehensible to the student, and then to publish textbooks embodying the new principles. In May, 1801, Carey had thirteen students in his Bengali class but not one textbook.[3] At first, textbooks were given to students by professors, who later billed the government. In September, 1801, Gilchrist, for example, submitted a demand for 4,212 rupees for books given to his classes in recent months.

Originally Wellesley intended that the College offer the student a balanced curriculum between European and non-European subjects. Actually, the emphasis was Orientalist from the beginning because the faculty had been recruited largely from the Asiatic Society. The crucial need for linguistic research in the Indian tongues forced the college to become the chief patron for an indigenous literary and cultural revival.

Another important factor related to the student's sudden and direct involvement with an alien culture was the government's well-publicized offer of monetary and professional rewards.[4] The government held out the promise of lucrative cash awards as well as future elitist appointments provided that the student mastered Indian languages, customs, and laws.[5] Five thousand rupees (£625) was paid to any student who already knew Sanskrit or Persian and who could pass a difficult examination in Mohammedan or Hindu

[2] E. Thompson, *Life of Charles, Lord Metcalfe*, p. 10; "William Butterworth Bayley," *Concise Dictionary of National Biography*, p. 74.

[3] Dās, p. 110.

[4] The college awards were recorded in the local press and in Company publications abroad.

[5] This was the policy of every governor-general from Wellesley to Amherst (1828).

law. High proficiency in any Indian language earned the student 1,000 rupees whereas "simple proficiency" was worth 500.[6] The European establishment seemed to offer only one prize—a gold medal for high proficiency in the composition of an English essay.[7]

The significant feature of the new government-sponsored appreciation of Indian culture was the linking of achievement in Oriental subjects at the college with subsequent civil-service appointments. It should come as no surprise that the bright young men who first learned administration under Wellesley and went on to distinguish themselves in later years were all recipients of the college's monetary rewards in Oriental subjects—principally in languages (see Table 4). This continued to be the case after Wellesley's departure and despite the establishment of Haileybury College. Men at the College of Fort William such as Holt Mackenzie, Brian Hodgson, Andrew Stirling, and Charles Trevelyan carried on the tradition of their predecessors.

If the essays left behind by the students are a true reflection of their attitudes, then the educational process at the college was a success. In these annually published essays written in Indian languages the young men demonstrated remarkable linguistic ability and a persisting affinity with the cosmopolitan ideals of the eighteenth century.

The Metcalfes, Bayleys, and Martins advocated social and cultural change for India but believed that England should first help Asians rediscover the lost roots of their own civilizations. Inspired by William Jones, the men of this generation first developed the revivalistic or renaissance interpretation of Asian history. They argued that Asian civilizations were truly healthy and vigorous in ancient times but that they had somehow degenerated. According to W. B. Martin, one of the early students at the college: "We [the English] shall bring to light their various forms of government with their Institutions, civil and religious; talents, which have hitherto lain smothered under the despondency of neglect now roused into

[6] A list of the students receiving such awards from 1800 to 1842 is in *A General Register of the Hon'ble East Indian Company's Civil Servants of the Bengal Establishment*, comp. H. T. Prinsep (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1844).

[7] *Ibid.*

Table 4

THE BACKGROUND OF OUTSTANDING CIVIL SERVANTS AT THE COLLEGE OF FORT WILLIAM, 1800–1813

Name	*Earliest Matriculation Date*	*Languages and Prizes (Rupees)*	*Chief Mentor In College*	*First Civil-Service Post*
Barwell, E. R.	1807	Bengali; 500 Urdu; 500	Carey	Registrar, City Court, Dacca
Bayley, W. B.	1800	Urdu; 1500	Gilchrist	Assistant, Governor-general's office
Bird, W. W.	1803	Sanskrit; honorary	Colebrooke	Assistant to Magistrate, Benares
Brown, R.	1805	Persian; 1500 Urdu; 1200	Gilchrist	Registrar to Calcutta High Court
Fortesque, T.	1800			Assistant to Governor-general's Office
Haughton, G. P.	1812	Persian; 1000 Urdu; 1000 Bengali; 1000	Carey	Professor, Oriental Languages, Halleybury
Littledale, J.	1803	Bengali; 500 Arabic; 1500	Carey	Assistant, Governor-general's Office
Mackenzie, H.	1808	Bengali; 1000	Carey	Registrar to Calcutta High Court
Martin, W. B.	1800	Urdu; 5000 Bengali; 1000	Carey	Assistant, Governor-general's Office
Metcalfe, C.	1800		Barlow	Assistant, Governor-general's Office
Monckton, J.	1800	Urdu; 1100	Gilchrist	Assistant, Persian Translator's Office

Name	*Earliest Matriculation Date*	*Languages and Prizes (Rupees)*	*Chief Mentor In College*	*First Civil-Service Post*
Prinsep, H. T.	1809	Persian; 500 Urdu; 250 Bengali; 250	Carey	Registrar to Calcutta High Court
Sargent, H.	1806	Urdu; 500 Bengali; 500	Carey	Secretarial Assistant, Political and Foreign Departments
Shakespear, H.	1802	Persian; 1000	Carey	Assistant to Judge, Nadia and Burdwan
Stirlin, A.	1813	Urdu; 1000 Arabic; 1000 Persian; 1000	Roebuck	Assistant to Resident, Delhi
Sutherland, J. C. C.	1810	Urdu; 1500 Persian; 250 Bengali; high proficiency Hindu Law; 5000	Lumsden	Registrar to Calcutta High Court
Swinton, G.	1802	Urdu, Persian and Arabic; high proficiency	Baillie	Assistant, Governor-general's Office
Tod, A.	1801	Bengali; high proficiency	Carey	Assistant to Judge Provincial Court of Appeal, Calcutta

SOURCE: Compiled principally from Proceedings of the College of Fort William, *Home Miscellaneous Series.* Indian National Archives, New Delhi.

exertion, shall be encouraged to produce to the world its prominent events and distinguished characters, with superior splendor."[8]

Some students, such as W. P. Eliot, advocated the introduction of Christian morality and European science into India but wished

[8] W. B. Martin, "On the Advantages to be Expected from an Academical Institution in India," *Essays by the Students of the College of Fort William in Bengal*, p. 7. Cited hereafter as *Essays* (1802).

this to be done within the general structure of the Hindu civilization. To Eliot it was folly to expect to Anglicize a people who had their own superior cultural history.

The greatest mistake England could make, Eliot emphasized, was to ignore the achievements of these Asian civilizations. "While the European world were hordes of barbarians," he argued, "learning and science flourished in higher perfection in the East in some branches, probably to a greater degree of excellence than has ever been since attained."[9]

The topics chosen by the students for their essays are in themselves interesting, for they reflect the emphasis that the college placed on broadly conceived cultural configurations sited vaguely within the broader framework of a comparative analysis that was still crude. In 1802 a Bengali disputation focused on whether "the Asiaticks are capable of as high a degree of civilization as the Europeans."[10] In the same year a discussion took place, in various languages, "On the best method of acquiring a knowledge of the manners and customs of the natives of India."[11] Still another topic selected in 1802 was "On the character and capacity of the Asiaticks and particularly of the natives of Hindoostan."[12] In 1803 there were a few declamations in Arabic, in which the finer elements of Arab civilization were defended with great ardor.[13] Richard Jenkins, who was also one of Carey's best Bengali pupils, spoke in Persian on whether the "natives of India under the British Government enjoy a greater degree of tranquility, security and happiness, than under any former Government."[14] In 1804 Alexander Tod delivered a brilliant dissertation in Bengali on whether "The translation of the best works extant in the Shanscrit into the popular languages of India would promote the extension of Science and civilization."[15]

On closer scrutiny, these disputations betray the rudimentary historical background of Europeans in regard to non-European Western cultures that was still characteristic of early nineteenth-century scholarship. The students' idol, William Jones, had only

[9] W. P. Eliot, "On the Advantages to be Expected from an Academical Institution in India," in *Essays* (1802), p. 22.
[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 197–219.
[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 45–86.
[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 94–131.
[13] *Primitiae Orientales* (1803), pp. 30–46.
[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 12–16.
[15] *Primitiae Orientales* (1804), pp. 56–72.

sketched the outline of the many areas for which future Orientalists would have to provide the details. Nevertheless, these colorful specimens of rhetoric should not be dismissed simply as evidence of historical ignorance or as the crude formulations of dimly known cultural patterns. They represented part of a general search for cultural definition that was also evident at this time in Europe.[16] Beneath the veneer of self-assured generalizations on civilizations there was a search for the durable elements in cultures and for the media responsible for their integration into organically interrelated culture patterns.

W. B. Bayley, for instance, viewed the Sanskritic tradition as containing the elements of a high culture which his contemporaries referred to as Brahmanism.[17] Unfortunately, Bayley believed, very little was yet known of the ethos behind this ancient civilization. He hoped that "Sanskrit literature would yield valuable and interesting information."[18] In the manner of Jones and Colebrooke, he signalled regions still to be explored: "the wide ocean of Hindu mythology remains to be more fully explored and the mysteries of its religion to be more clearly elucidated. Here, then are provinces, in which learning may put forth its utmost strength, and which promise to yield fruits, that will confer glorious immortality on its labours."[19]

The future governor-general, Charles T. Metcalfe, while a student at the college in 1802 emphasized linguistic research as the best means for probing into the distinguishing features or cultural traits of a people.[20] He believed that the language of the British people was marked by its "openness and boldness of expression."[21] To him the French language was filled with terms of "politeness and suavity . . . [that] bespeak of disposition and elegance of manners." India, Metcalfe thought, contained "various races and faiths" and "we have made only a beginning in understanding their languages."[22]

[16] It is not uncommon to view this renewed interest in Asian cultures as a second European renaissance. See Schwab, pp. 18–28.

[17] W. B. Bayley, "On the Advantages to be Expected from an Academical Institution in India," in *Essays* (1802), pp. 39–45.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] C. T. Metcalfe, "On the Best Method of Acquiring a Knowledge of the Manners and Customs of the Natives of India," *Ibid.*, pp. 81–87.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 81.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 86.

For William B. Martin, cultural differences were obliterated in a universalistic dimension in which all civilizations shared the same cultural elements. "The Asiaticks," he wrote, "had climbed the heights of science before the Greeks had learned their alphabet."[23] While Europeans lived in forests as savages, Asians "were collected into populous cities, the seats of arts, of luxury and of despotism."[24] The chief difference between civilizations was in their present historical disposition. Martin was a proponent of the concept of renaissance, in which a whole culture, once alive with achievement but now in a dark period, might find resurrection once more. Evincing a strong predisposition for Asian civilization, Martin wrote:

> Literature, taste and science originated in Asia and by a general diffusion, in the course of time spread themselves over Greece and Italy. Such then having been once the state of the sciences and arts among the Asiaticks, it cannot be unreasonable to suppose, that their ability still remains unhurt and vigorous; and that those sparks of genius hitherto smothered or enfeebled by the noxious climate of oppression, might under the congenial influence of a milder government and more favorable laws, again be fanned into a flame.[25]

In contrast to disputations by students in other departments, those of Colebrooke's students in Sanskrit reflected a more differentiated conception of India's cultures. The others were inclined, in the manner of Jones, to speak of specific Asian cultures on the one hand but to view them also as a greater unity vaguely subsumed under "Asiatic Civilization." Probably as a result of Colebrooke's influence, the popular theme of renaissance among the Hindu-language students became less Asian in scope and more Hindu in identification, while the elements in the renewal of a culture were becoming more specific within the Sanskritic tradition. The tendency was to liken Hindu medievalism to European medievalism and to maintain that Brahmans, like the European monks, kept their peoples in darkness by substituting superstition for religion and by stifling intellectual curiosity that might lead to scientific knowledge. Just as Europe liberated itself by reviving its classical literature, so might Hindu India do the same. According to one student won over to Hinduism by Colebrooke and Carey:

[23] W. B. Martin, "On the Character and Capacity of the Asiaticks and Particularly of the Natives of Hindoostan," *ibid.*, p. 115.
[24] *Ibid.*
[25] *Ibid.*

> We may confidently hope that the same happy consequences would be the result arising from the translation of Sanscrit works; particularly as it is supposed that they contain many contradictions concerning their present Deities and Devotions. When these circumstances shall have been made manifest to the people, is it not possible that they might forsake and relinquish many of their foolish and idolatrous prejudices and when once this chief obstacle is removed, they might progressively advance in the pursuit of knowledge and learning. . . .[26]

Most of the young men under Colebrooke and Carey seemed to identify India with Hinduism and regarded the Muslims as intruders. Like Martin, they felt that the Hinduism might again become great under British encouragement. In their idea of renaissance, *sati* and other objectionable Hindu customs were generally seen as examples of the degraded or "medieval" form of present-day Hinduism.[27] Though there were many generalizations about the golden age of Hindu civilization, no one was quite sure just what the Hindu ethos was. Caste was condemned as "medieval"[28] and idolatry was attacked with strong Protestant indignation.[29]

All the students whose essays have been read by the author were convinced that institutions such as the Asiatic Society and the College of Fort William would make substantial contributions toward uncovering and revitalizing Asian cultures. W. P. Eliot summed up the position of his enthusiastic compatriots when he said:

> India has been long descending by slow degrees into the gulph of barbarism and ignorance, and learning and the arts have been gradually falling into disrepute and obscurity. The ample field which this Institution [College of Fort William] proposes to itself, comprehending the languages, literature, arts and sciences of all the more polished nations of Asia, will not fail in a few years to assemble the most learned men from all parts, by affording them suitable encouragement. Nor does it end here. The student

[26] A. B. Tod, "On the Translation of Sanskrit," *Primitiae Orientales* (1804), p. 61.

[27] W. Chaplin, "Suicide of Hindoo Widows by Burning Themselves with the Bodies of their Deceased Husbands, is a Practice Repugnant to the Natural Feelings and Inconsistent with Moral Duty," *Primitiae Orientales* (1803), pp. 60–61.

[28] J. Hunter, "Distribution of Hindus into Castes Retards their Progress in Improvement," *ibid.*, p. 75.

[29] A. B. Tod, "On the Translation of Shanscrit," *Primitiae Orientales* (1804), p. 57.

> will come into active life with a taste for Eastern literature, and extend that patronage so happily begun; the shoots of science will again spring up and flourish and the East will regain its once well merited celebrity.[30]

In 1807, the Court of Directors decided that that portion of the College of Fort William teaching the European curriculum should be removed to Haileybury, England, and left a reduced establishment in Calcutta to continue the college's program of instruction in Orientalist subjects. It was not intended that Haileybury should replace the College of Fort William but that it should function as a sort of preparatory school where civil servants were to be indoctrinated with British socio-cultural values before being turned over to the tutelage of the Calcutta Orientalists. The Court of Directors hoped eventually to decentralize the training program for civil servants even further by founding new colleges in Bombay and Madras.[31] The one important long-range effect of these moves was ultimately to convert Wellesley's "university of the East" into a college more responsive to the needs of the Hindu intelligentsia in Calcutta.

Between 1806 and 1813 the college continued to provide large grants for student awards, linguistic experimentation, studies of the indigenous culture, and translations of Oriental classics. The Court of Directors permitted the College to spend 150,000 rupees yearly but warned the College Council not to exceed that figure.[32] The Court never interfered with the college's policy of generous literary patronage, which, for example, amounted to 48,092 rupees during the pre-Haileybury years of 1805 and 1806[33] and continued at approximately the same sum even until 1815.[34]

One very practical reason that the educational process at the College of Fort William proved more effective than the Haileybury training was that Wellesley had continued the Hastings tradition of reserving certain positions only for the most accomplished Orientalists. Wellesley's policy of recruiting the best students from the college to serve their administrative apprenticeship in the highest

[30] Eliot, *Essays* (1802), p. 32.
[31] "1807 Chapter," *The Statutes of the College of Fort William in Bengal*, pp.1–13.
[32] PCFW, DLXI (September 9, 1810), pp. 220–223.
[33] *Ibid.*, DLX (April, 1806, accounts), 143–144.
[34] *Ibid.*, DLXIV (October 16, 1816), 199–201.

bureaus of state under his personal supervision helped to create an *esprit de corps* among a small clique into which all later students sought admission. This clique, formed in 1803 by Wellesley,[35] included Charles Metcalfe, W. B. Bayley, Richard Jenkins, and John Monckton, and took great pride in its historic mission of building a new empire. At the same time, its members remained faithful to the Orientalist spirit that they had absorbed during their Fort William College days. According to John W. Kaye, who edited Metcalfe's correspondence:

> Incidents . . . were surely calculated to bind such warmhearted, earnest youths as Charles Metcalfe by the strongest feelings of personal attachment and fidelity to Lord Wellesley. They not only worked for him, they worked with him. And the endearment thus engendered was reciprocal. No statesman ever took a livelier interest in the intellectual development of the disciples who sat at his feet. He watched their progress with affectionate concern: he encouraged and stimulated them by judicious praise. He was at once their master and their friend; and there was not one of them who did not identify himself with his policy, and was not eager to contribute to its success.[36]

Wellesley's policy of encouraging bright students with monetary awards and the promise of high-echelon posts in the government was continued by Lord Minto during his administration (1807–1813) (see Table 4, page 98). Many of the students who came from Haileybury to Fort William during those years to complete the Orientalist phase of their education adopted the Orientalist outlook.

Among the best students who graduated from the College of Fort William between 1806 and 1813 were Henry T. Prinsep (1810), Holt Mackenzie (1810), James C. C. Sutherland (1811), Graves C. Haughton (1810), and Andrew Stirling (1813). In this group of five, the only non-Haileybury graduate was Haughton, who had entered the civil service from the ranks of the Indian Army. Of all the leading Haileybury students, Holt Mackenzie was the only man who acquired utilitarian views and turned his back on Orientalism later in his career.[37] From 1823 onwards,

[35] *The Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe*, comp. J. W. Kaye (London: Smith, Elder Company, 1858), I, 79.

[36] *Ibid.*, p. 81.

[37] When Mackenzie joined the General Committee of Public Instruction in 1823, he began to urge educational reforms on the basis of their utility in

Henry Prinsep, his brother James Prinsep, and Sutherland constituted the hard core of Orientalists under H. H. Wilson's leadership in the General Committee of Public Instruction.

The Haileybury men who came to Fort William during the Minto administration ascended the hierarchal ranks of the administration precisely as their predecessors had done under Wellesley, accepting as they went the same Orientalist bias. This tradition continued so long as the governors-general were favorably disposed towards Wellesley's general cultural attitudes.[38] Bayley, Mackenzie, H. T. Prinsep, Bird, Sutherland, and Macnaughton all began their careers as "registers" in the Sudder Dewani Adaulat, became special assistants to the governor-general, and gradually worked their way into one or another bureau of the foreign office. Throughout the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the Persian Department of the government was staffed with the best students from the College of Fort William. It might be noted that the persisting fiction of Moghul rule in India and the continuous use of Persian as the diplomatic-legal language of India ensured the Persian Department of the College of Fort William its paramount position.

Not all members of this group were assigned to desks in Calcutta. Men such as Metcalfe were sent into the field where they experienced actual combat,[39] were entrusted with dangerous diplomatic missions to the courts of Indian princes,[40] or were assigned as residents in potentially explosive regions of the subcontinent.[41]

When Metcalfe was placed in charge of Delhi's civil and judicial administration in 1811, his achievements proved that cultural responsiveness to Hinduism was not necessarily incompatible with social reform. During his eight years at Delhi, there was not one case of capital punishment.[42] In contrast to the Utilitarians, he doubted the effectiveness of European-style law courts in India, for he believed that the people distrusted and despised them since "Indians were happier under their own freer and more personal

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a Benthamite sense. National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, *Mackenzie Papers*, Vol. XVII, f. 729.

[38] With the advent of the Bentinck administration, Anglicists such as Charles Trevelyan repudiated the Wellesley Orientalist ideals.

[39] *The Life and Correspondence of Charles, Lord Metcalfe*, pp. 42–87.

[40] *Ibid.*, pp. 126–335.

[41] Metcalfe served as Delhi Resident from 1811 to 1819 and as Hyderabad Resident from 1820 to 1825.

[42] Thompson, p. 123.

regimes."[43] On the one hand, by personalizing justice through his own office, Metcalfe was sustaining the paternalistic policy of the Moghul rulers. On the other hand, he spared the people under his jurisdiction many of the evils seemingly inevitable when an alien legal structure is imported and made to function in opposition to established customs and values. Metcalfe also forbade widow-burning, but he did so not in a spirit of righteous indignation of a crusading European. Instead, he let it be known that he was merely reintroducing a statute that an "Asiatick" emperor, Akbar, had already enacted in the sixteenth century.[44] And, motivated by the same sense of moral disgust that William Jones experienced in 1785,[45] Metcalfe abolished slavery in Delhi in 1812.[46]

While Metcalfe served in the field, his old classmates advanced themselves socially and professionally without ever leaving Calcutta. Thus it is not surprising that among Minto's closest advisers, from his arrival in Calcutta in July, 1807, until his departure in October of 1813, were young members of the Wellesley clique: Jenkins, Bayley, and Adam. Throughout those years, two others in the group, Prinsep and Mackenzie, were assisting Chief Judge J. H. Harington at the Sudder Dewani Adaulat.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 124.
[44] *Ibid.*, p. 127.
[45] H. P. Ghosh, "Bengal 1750–1800," *Calcutta Review*, CXII (February, 1957), 118.
[46] Thompson, p. 128.

VIII

The College Environment and the Emergence of a Modern Intelligentsia in Bengal

The first stage in the evolution of both the traditional and Persianized Hindi literati of Bengal into a modernized intelligentsia was that of professionalization. Confronted by the rapid drying up of the normal sources of patronage, many literati flocked to Calcutta in search of a livelihood. In almost all cases, those without adequate private means sought careers in association with Englishmen. However, a few men independently wealthy by birth, such as Radhakant Deb, avoided professional or commercial contact with Englishmen.[1] Others, such as Rammohun Roy, achieved this independence in middle age after spending years in profitable association with the English.[2]

Increasingly, after the promulgation of the Cornwallis "reforms," educated high-caste Hindus in and around Calcutta, whether wealthy or not, chose occupations in newly formed British-oriented institutions. Rusomoy Dutt, born into the respectable Rambagan Dutt family of Calcutta in 1780, began his career as a clerk in an English commercial firm at 16 rupees per week and developed rapidly into an efficiency expert, to use a modern term.[3] He started his private fortune with a 10,000-rupee bonus awarded

[1] Radhakant Deb was the adopted son of Gopimohan Deb, son of the fabulously wealthy Naba Krishna Deb.

[2] *Infra*, pp. 196–197.

[3] B. V. Roy, p. 20.

him for recommending ways and means of saving the Company several times that amount.[4]

The introduction of the private-property principle into Bengal in 1793 and the growing importance of litigation in an expanding judicial system resulted in the creation of a new class of pleaders.[5] Rammohun Roy's friend, Rajiblochan Roy, apparently developed into a brilliant pleader by English standards. It was he who successfully defended the Raja against his nephew before the Supreme Court in 1817–19.[6] The most successful pleader in the first half of the nineteenth century was probably Prasanna Kumar Tagore (born 1800?), who earned approximately 150,000 rupees a year from the practice of this profession alone.[7]

For those Bengali intellectuals who wished to find support for their scholarly work, the College of Fort William, with its peripheral and satellite institutions, provided a source of literary patronage. The kinds of literati attracted to Fort William were more intellectual or scholarly than their counterparts who were more drawn to the bureaucracy, the agency house, or the law court. Although in addition to its literary patronage the college also offered Bengalis a training center for professionalization, the learned professions themselves were marginal sectors of the Bengal economy. The learned Indian who entered the service of the collegiate institution in 1801 with his store of traditional learning could develop into a teacher, prose stylist, philologist or linguist, compositor, printer, publisher, or librarian. He might earn, aside from patronage, a minimum of 10 rupees a month and a maximum of 200. Even though his income compared unfavorably with that of his educated counterparts closer to the marketplace, he did far better than his peers who taught in indigenous institutions and who lived in a state of genteel poverty.[8]

In most cases, at first, the literati were hired by the college as pundits with the general responsibility of assisting the professor in

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Misra, *Indian Middle Classes*, p. 14.

[6] *Selections from Official Letters and Documents Relating to the Life of Raja Rammohun Roy*, I, xli.

[7] S. Sastri, *Ramtanu Lahiri and the History of the Renaissance in Bengal* (Calcutta: S. K. Lahiri and Company, 1907), p. 200.

[8] The pay of professors of indigenous institutions of higher learning averaged 79 rupees a year, and in depressed areas some elementary-school teachers earned as little as one rupee a year. Adam, pp. 79, 111.

teaching classes, compiling textbooks, and selecting material for readers. The College Council, partly from ignorance and partly from administrative expediency, insisted that its Asian staff be expert in all matters Indian. In practice, however, especially in the Bengali and Sanskrit Departments, the literati developed definitely limited professional interests and skills stemming from the concentration of patronage on what might be termed "problem-solving activities."

For example, Tarincharan Mitra brought with him to Gilchrist's Hindustani Department a linguistic endowment seemingly common among that generation of the Calcutta Hindu elite that owed its sudden socio-economic ascendency to the prevailing chaos of the Plassey period.[9] Born in north Calcutta in 1772, he probably learned, as was then fashionable, elementary English in a Eurasian school, Sanskrit at a *tol*, Persian and Arabic from a *munshi*, and Urdu as a matter of course in order to communicate with Indian Muslims.[10] He was hired by the College of Fort William on May 4, 1801, as second pundit of the Hindustani Department at a salary of 100 rupees a month. Later that year, when the Chief Pundit Miri Ali died, William Hunter, then Urdu professor, elevated Mitra to this post and increased his salary to 200 rupees per month.[11]

With his great linguistic capacity and achievement, Tarinicharan easily developed into one of the finest native philologists that the college produced. Gilchrist's strong desire to simplify the Urdu language by giving it a regular set of principles based on European models elicited large financial support from the College Council, and Mitra was actively involved in all projects related to this systematization. It was probably this talent and linguistic knowledge, combined with European methods and skills, that helped develop Mitra into a professional. Mitra was, in fact, Gilchrist's protégé. In the preface to the *Oriental Fabulist* (1803), Gilchrist wrote: "It behooves me now more particularly to specify that to Tarnee Churun Mitra's patient labour and considerable proficiency in the English tongue, am I greatly indebted for the accuracy and dispatch with which the collection has been at last completed."[12]

Tarinicharan's chief accomplishment as a professional linguist was the development of an improved methodology in applying Gil-

[9] Dās, p. 204.
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] PCFW, DLXI (January 13, 1810), 186.
[12] Gilchrist, pp. xxiv–v.

christ's orthographic innovations to transliteration both from one Oriental language to another and from Oriental languages to English. The principles underlying this methodology were first compiled by Gilchrist with the assistance of Mitra in 1802 and 1803 under the title of "Practical Outlines."[13] It was designed to serve as a practical guide for Fort William students and aimed to teach the written and spoken lingua franca of Hindustan by employing one method. Gilchrist's shortcut to mastering literary and colloquial Urdu was to Romanize the script and to simplify the literary passages by Anglicizing their syntactical structure. Later Orientalists ridiculed Gilchrist's method as an exercise in wishful thinking, since he was actually less interested in disclosing and regularizing the established literary and spoken patterns of the indigenous culture than he was in altering those patterns to fit those of an alien language and culure.[14]

Mitra's utilization of the Gilchrist method was evident in two principal works supported by the college: the *Oriental Fabulist* (1803) and the *Sukuntula Natok* (1804). The *Fabulist* was a polyglot attempt under Gilchrist's direction to demonstrate his "system" by translating universally popular fables, such as those of Aesop, from English. Changing even the customary transliteration for the names of Indian languages, Gilchrist announced on the title page that these fables had been translated into "Hindoostanee, Persian, Arabic, Bruj Bhasha, Bongla, and Sanskrit in the Roman Character. . . ."[15] Mitra handled the Bengali, Persian, and Urdu translations.

The *Fabulist* was a remarkable experiment, notwithstanding its artless simplicity of style and its misleading attempt to show a similarity of grammatical structure between languages that were obviously dissimilar by simply altering them to conform with the English pattern.[16] In Mitra's *Sakuntula*, also an experiment with Romanized script, one finds the same characteristics of simplicity, lucidity, and close adherence to the English grammatical pattern.[17]

Despite his handicap of having learned the discipline of linguis-

[13] *Primitiae Orientales* (1803), p. xlvi.

[14] See letter from H. H. Wilson to Ram Camul Sen, August 20, 1834, quoted in P. C. Mitra, *Life of Dewani Ram Comul Sen* (Calcutta: I. C. Bose and Company, 1880), p. 18.

[15] Gilchrist, title page.

[16] Mitra makes all his sentences short and complete, and uses all the English punctuation marks, including quotation marks to enclose spoken dialogue.

[17] Examples of Mitra's style are found in B. N. Bandyopādhyāy, *Phort Oiliyam Kalejer Pandit* (S-s-c series; 1947), pp. 19–22.

tics from Gilchrist, Tarinicharan gained the modest historical distinction of being among India's first "Western"-trained linguists. Unlike his compatriots in Carey's Bengali Department, whose prose styles indicate clearly that they knew only Sanskrit, Mitra was well grounded in several languages. His knowledge of English gave him an opportunity to acquire new skills and professionalize his talent. His preference for the linguistic over the literary in his work is evident not only in his regular application of Gilchrist's principles but also in the fact that he never felt obliged to write a single original prose work in the languages he dissected and reassembled so skillfully.

The literary worth of the Bengali pundits' work has often been analyzed by scholars of Bengali literature, many of whom trace the origins of modern Bengali or even other Indian vernacular prose to the college. As has been already pointed out, it is common to bestow on William Carey the honor of having been "father of modern Bengali prose."[18] Nevertheless, these same scholars generally dismiss the style of the Fort William pundits as being obscure, dull, unintelligible, and prone to be more like Sanskrit than Bengali.

The full sociocultural and intellectual implications of the efforts of Carey and the Bengali Brahmans on behalf of Bengali language and literature have often been overlooked by the literary historian. By divorcing literature from the personal experience of the writer, and by not viewing literature as a reflection of experience, many critics have overlooked the dynamics underlying the relationship. The writings of the pundits reflected first of all a transfer of cultural allegiance from the classical Sanskrit to what the Bengali Brahmans had hitherto called "that Prakrit dialect fit only for demons and women."[19]

Secondly, Carey's pundits pursued their interest to the point of becoming modern India's first prose stylists. While the Asians in other departments of the college translated Oriental classics or flirted with the discipline of linguistics, the Bengal literati, under Carey's encouragement, went further in transcending their traditional limitations and in experimenting creatively with new literary forms.

Mrtyunjay Vidyalankar, Carey's Chief Pundit in the Bengali

[18] William Carey's role in the origins of modern Bengali prose is most authentically reviewed in Dās, pp. 164–168, and De, pp. 140–143.

[19] De, p. 46.

Department, who was acknowledged to be the most intellectual and the best scholar of the Asian staff,[20] epitomized this process of intellectual evolution. Born in 1762 in that part of Midnapore close to Orissa, this Chattopadhyay Brahman probably received a rigid, regionally traditional Sanskritic education at Nator, totally devoid of Persian and European influences.[21] Though concrete evidence is lacking we can surmise that he left Midnapore sometime in the 1790's and, as did so many other Brahmans, came to Calcutta in search of a livelihood. Mrtyunjay must have impressed Carey, because in May, 1801, when the Asian staff was first recruited, he was appointed immediately as Chief Pundit with a salary of 200 rupees per month.

As has already been intimated, Mrtyunjay was the typical Brahman possessing an unyielding cultural pride and a prejudice in favor of the Sanskritic tradition. On the other hand, Mrtyunjay comfortably assimilated work habits and literary and linguistic techniques from his European mentor. Mrtyunjay was as close to Carey as was any Hindu, spending several hours of every working day in Calcutta as the latter's private tutor in Sanskrit,[22] as his assistant lecturer at college classes,[23] and as ghostwriter for some of Carey's publications.[24] If Carey were ill his chief pundit would substitute for him as instructor, apparently conducting his class entirely in Bengali.[25] It was probably Mrtyunjay whom Carey chose to sit with him for the famous portrait by Home.

Of the four works attributed to Mrtyunjay between 1801 and 1814, two were original, and these established him as one of the first important professional writers of vernacular prose in modern India. His earliest work, the *Batriś Simhāsan* (*Thirty-two Thrones*), which appeared in 1802, is commonly held to be a "translation from Sanskrit . . . into plain, simple Bengali."[26] This evaluation is partly true but also rather misleading, since it is diffi-

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

[21] See the introduction of *Mrtyuñjay Granthābalī*, ed. B. N. Bandyopādhyāẏ (Kalikātā: Ranjan Pābliśim Hāus, 1939), pp. iii–iv.

[22] De, p. 184.

[23] The practice seems to have been for the Chief Pundit to sit with the European instructor in class to correct the pronunciation of students or to answer difficult questions. PCFW, DLX (September, 1805).

[24] S. K. Dās believes that Carey's *Dialogues* (1801) were largely the work of Mrtyunjay; see Dās, p. 136.

[25] PCFW, DLX (September 5, 1805).

[26] De, pp. 184–185.

cult to determine the precise differences in the early 1800's between the style of literary Bengali and Sanskrit in the Bengali script. It is a "plain" and "simple" work primarily because it was a written version of a collection of popular fables on the qualities of King Vikramaditya. Brahmans in Bengal, as elsewhere in India, traditionally recited such fables before gatherings of peasants.

The significance of such translations for the cultural historian lies in the willingness of Brahmans to communicate bits and pieces of their special fund of knowledge to an unknown reading public by means of the printed word. Certainly, this process was not new; pundits had already disclosed fragments of their knowledge to Orientalists such as Jones and Wilkins. There is, however, one crucial difference between the objectives of early Orientalists and those of the College of Fort William. Whereas Jones and Wilkins translated the Sanskrit classics into English for European readers, the college—perhaps unwittingly—encouraged translations into the Indian vernaculars, thereby creating a body of printed material which would eventually break the intellectual monopoly of the Brahmans.

The ability of the literati to master the technical skills of alien occupations which contributed to their new role and outlook was evident also in the field of printing and publishing in Calcutta. As in the teaching of linguistics, the College of Fort William seems to have pioneered in giving the impetus and opportunity for Asian participation in these practical arts. Calcutta seems to have had no printing press at all in 1768[27] and, as already mentioned, no press equipped to print indigenous languages until 1778.[28] The growing need for reproducing governmental proclamations in the Indian languages and the rise of journalism helped Francis Gladwin create the Calcutta Gazette Press in 1783.[29] From then on, the industry developed gradually—although few Indians were involved in its operations.

It was the College of Fort William that made printing and publishing in the classical and vernacular tongues possible in India on a large scale. This development was stimulated by its ever-increasing need for authentic publications and was possible because it possessed the requisite financial resources. Within its first decade of operation, Fort William had created an array of peri-

[27] "First Establishment of a Press in Calcutta," *Friend of India*, I (February 26, 1835), 65.
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] *Dās*, p. 31.

pheral and satellite institutions that fostered an atmosphere conducive to the expansion of the communicative arts. In 1801 Serampore Mission Press was launched;[30] in 1802 Gilchrist and Hunter established the Hindoostanee Press;[31] in 1805 Mathew Lumsden received financial aid for a Persian Press;[32] and in 1807, through the initiative of Colebrooke, the Sanskrit Press was established.[33] Every one of these enterprises owed its origin and continued existence to college support. Without these establishments and their years of experimentation and improvement, it is doubtful whether Serampore could have published India's first vernacular newspaper in 1818 or whether the Calcutta School Book Society could have published the first in its series of textbooks in that same year.

The art of printing Oriental literature in authentic character forms was introduced into India by Charles Wilkins in 1778. He was assisted by a Bengali named Panchanan who was destined by virtue of his unusual technical knowledge to become William Ward's most prized Asian associate at Serampore.[34]

Panchanan, a low-caste blacksmith, was a transitional figure who linked the pioneering achievements of the Wilkins generation with the needs of the Fort William generation and helped printing and publishing in Calcutta to evolve from its early base. Specialization of skills being rare in eighteenth-century Bengal, Panchanan was compelled to learn all the aspects of his new trade. It is evident that in addition to familiarizing himself with European techniques of printing, Panchanan also acquired skills in metallurgy and engraving from Wilkins.[35] In the 1790's, Panchanan, like many Bengalis of all castes, was one of Calcutta's unemployed with a skill or education or both.[36] When Colebrooke was transferred to Calcutta to organize the Sanskrit Department at the college, Panchanan seems to have been employed by him in some capacity—just what kind is not clear.[37] Bengali scholars generally believe that

[30] *Supra*, p. 72.

[31] Gilchrist apparently started the enterprise with "a printing press and other material . . . lent by Mr. Francis Gladwin." PCFW, DLIX (January 30, 1802), 57.

[32] *Ibid.*, DLX (September 20, 1805), 45–46.

[33] For the first reference to Babooram's press in college records, see *ibid.* (April 11, 1807), 304.

[34] Khan, p. 251.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] De, p. 76.

[37] M. S. Khan claims, and most other sources agree, that Panchanan was cutting type for Colebrooke; see Khan, p. 249.

Panchanan came to Serampore in 1800 from Calcutta in search of work. The evidence suggests that he was encouraged to leave Colebrooke's employ by Carey or that Colebrooke acceded to Carey's argument that Panchanan would be more useful in helping establish the Mission Press.[38]

Panchanan started to work in Ward's press in 1800 as a master type-founder, and immediately began cutting fonts for Sanskrit and Bengali. By 1803, when the elderly Panchanan retired from his job, he had succeeded in cutting three different fonts of Bengali characters. One of these was a small-size type that reduced the dimensions of any work in Bengali by one-fourth.[39] He had also cut a new font of Devanagari type which was reputedly the best anywhere in the world.[40] In 1803 he passed on his accumulated skills to his apprentice and son-in-law, Monohar Karmakar, who by 1850 had cut type for fifteen Oriental languages (including his gift to Marshman of a Chinese font with 43,000 characters).[41]

In 1802 John Gilchrist and William Hunter obtained sufficient patronage to found the important Hindoostanee Press. This press was designed to help carry out that "linguistic reformation" involving the revitalization of Hindustani which Gilchrist advocated.[42] In 1804, when Gilchrist returned to England, Hunter became sole proprietor of the press.[43] As secretary for both Fort William and the Asiatic Society, Hunter exerted great influence in winning contracts for the press. In 1808, for example, Hunter won the *Asiatick Researches* contract after demonstrating that the Hindoostanee Press could print the journal better and cheaper than any competitor.[44] When news of Hunter's death in Java reached Calcutta in 1813, a rising young Orientalist named Horace Hayman Wilson became director of the Press.[45]

It was the Hindoostanee Press that first enabled Ram Camul Sen

[38] The controversy is fully discussed by Khan, *ibid.*

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 251.

[40] *Ibid.*

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 252.

[42] *Supra*, pp. 82–83.

[43] *Supra*, pp. 84–85.

[44] LASB–MP, II (February 3, 1808), 35.

[45] After learning of Ram Camul Sen's death in 1844, Wilson reviewed their long association together in a public letter of November 2, 1844, in which he said, "When Leyden and Hunter went to Java, I was in charge of the Press. . . ." Quoted by Mitra, p. 43.

to transcend the narrow world of his early youth and to achieve the unparalleled success which has since given him the reputation of a kind of Horatio Alger of the Bengali intelligentsia.[46] Claiming to be a Kashatriya and, according to his own account, a descendant of Ballal Sena,[47] he left a Hooghly village for Calcutta in 1790 at the age of seven.[48] While his father's proficiency in Persian assured him clerical positions, Ram Camul Sen learned English, Sanskrit, and Persian in the manner of the sons of the Calcutta elite.[49]

Ram Camul found his first job in 1803, as a subordinate clerk's assistant in the Calcutta Chief Magistrate's office.[50] He apparently impressed Blacquierie, the Chief Magistrate, also a member of the Persian group at the Asiatic Society. In all likelihood through Blacquierie, Sen made his first contacts with the Asiatic Society, an institution with which he was to be actively associated for most of his adult life.[51] Sen probably became acquainted with Hunter and Gilchrist either at the Society or at the college and was invited the next year (1804) to work in the Hindoostanee Press as a compositor.[52] In sharp contrast with the average Fort William pundit, who generally earned 40 rupees a month, Ram Camul was paid 8.[53]

Despite his low salary, Ram Camul always performed far more than was requested of him, profited from his knowledge of English and extended his range of contacts. In 1810, after meeting H. H. Wilson at the Press, Ram Camul's fortunes took a rapid upward swing. The two men developed a warm friendship that lasted until Sen's death in 1844. Under Wilson's sponsorship, and utilizing the skills and techniques acquired during his employment at the Hindoostanee Press, Sen began his extraordinary rise as an intellectual entrepreneur. By 1814 he had been appointed the "native" manager of the Hindoostanee Press.[54] During the years that followed, he became the most influential Asian in institutions as diverse as the

[46] Wilson wrote, "From a compositor, he raised himself by dint of industry, like Benjamin Franklin, to the foremost position among the natives of Bengal. . . ." Quoted by P. C. Mitra, p. 48.

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 2.

[48] *Ibid.*

[49] *Supra*, p. 62.

[50] Mitra, p. 7.

[51] *Infra*, p. 264.

[52] Mitra, p. 48.

[53] *Ibid.*

[54] According to Wilson, though he was proprietor of the Press, "Sen did most of the work." Quoted *ibid.*, p. 43.

Asiatic Society and the Calcutta Mint.[55] When Sen died, he left an estate of 1,000,000 rupees.[56]

The Sanskrit Press, which Colebrooke helped to establish in 1807, and which we unfortunately know least about, was notable in that it was the first printing firm completely under Indian management. In 1807 Colebrooke chose "Babooram Pundit" from the Sanskrit Department at the college to be manager of the Press. In the College Proceedings of 1809 Babu Ram was listed as proprietor.[57] The Sanskrit Press appears to have succeeded admirably until 1812, when it may well have been squeezed out by competitors. It owed its survival until then to Fort William's need to adapt the Sanskrit classics for classroom use. Typical of its work was a 1,600-page version of *Manu's Institutes*, which the College Council supported without question and for which they paid the Press 3,000 rupees.[58]

Book-selling establishments came into being largely as a result of the policy of the College of Fort William in promoting the restoration of the classical and vernacular languages of India, which entailed the support of printing and publishing firms to carry out that purpose. It must be stressed that after schools, the most important early agencies for the importation and diffusion of European culture to India were printing and publishing firms, bookstores, and libraries. In this as in the other cases (such as the library profession), Bengalis served their apprenticeship for these trades in the college or its associated institutions.

The first institutional library of Oriental books and manuscripts in India was founded at the College of Fort William in 1801–02.[59] The gradual increase both in instructional materials and in publications necessitated expansion of available facilities, and in 1805, when William Hunter was made college librarian, he immediately set out to reorganize the library.[60] College texts were usually expensive, ranging in cost from 5 to 20 rupees.[61] It appears that by 1807 a

[55] *Infra*, p. 264.

[56] "The Late Dewan Ram Kamul Sen," *Friend of India*, X (August 15, 1844), 513–514.

[57] PCFW, DLXI (May 3, 1809), 93–94.

[58] *Ibid.*, DLXII (July 3, 1812), 182.

[59] *Supra*, p. 67.

[60] *Supra*, p. 85.

[61] Examples of Fort William book prices are: Basu's *Pratāpāditya*, 6 rupees a copy, PCFW, DLIX (April 12, 1802), 70; Carey's *Sanskrit Dictionary*, 8 rupees a copy, *Ibid.*, DLX (January 1, 1807), 230; and a Sanskrit Press version

number of enterprising Indians in Calcutta were "borrowing" books from the college library and re-selling them to students and others for exorbitant sums. On November 18, 1807, the *Calcutta Gazette* listed the books missing from the library and requested public cooperation in apprehending the "thieves."[62]

The thievery seems to have continued, and on December 13, 1810, the College Council issued new regulations for the library in which is was clearly stated that "learned natives" not necessarily associated with Fort William were either "consulting books belonging to the College Library" or were "making extracts."[63] Too many books had disappeared, hence it was ruled that "no Book shall be taken from the Library for the use of any Native, excepting Such work as he may be employed in translating for the College, without special order from the College Council under the signature of the Secretary."[64]

In 1811 the College Council finally agreed to the creation of a special post of "adjutant librarian" to be filled by an Indian at a salary of 40 rupees a month.[65] They chose a Muslim from the Hindustani Department, who was to serve under a Bengali Hindu, Mohan Prasad Thakur, Hunter's assistant librarian since 1807.[66] In this way a library staff of Indians was formed at the college with specialized duties depending on their language competence. The books, however, continued to disappear. The surreptitious resale of the books stolen from the college library probably constituted the shady beginning of bookdealing in modern India. Sometime in 1811 the College Council decided to encourage a new class of legitimate dealers in Calcutta to handle surplus publications, with the aim of crippling the thieves' market by establishing a legitimate one and thus recovering part of the original cost of patronage.

Acting Secretary Thomas Roebuck's letter of July 18, 1814, to the governor-general's office described the workings of the new

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of the *Gita Gobinda* sold for two rupees, *ibid.*, DLX (December 27, 1808), 542.

[62] "Advertisements," *Calcutta Gazette*, November 18, 1807, quoted in *Selections from the Calcutta Gazette*, comp. W. S. Seton-Karr (Calcutta: Military Orphan Press, 1864), p. 429.

[63] PCFW, DLXI (December 13, 1810), 420.

[64] *Ibid.* The unusual capitalization in the quotation is that of the original document.

[65] *Ibid.*, DLXII (September 14, 1811), 32.

[66] Bandhyopādhyāy, *Phort Oiliyam*, p. 35.

system. Four hundred copies of a work by Mathew Lumsden of the Persian Department were found to be "more than will be required for the use of the Student."[67] Publishing the book had cost the College Council 7,000 rupees.[68] Therefore, Roebuck suggested that a number of copies be released "to the usual book sellers in Calcutta to be sold on account of Government at 20 rupees per copy, this being the price proposed by the Persian and Arabic Professor."[69] Roebuck assured the governor-general that a market existed. "The Council of the College are the more induced to recommend this measure from its having been intimated to them that several individuals have exercised their desire of purchasing the work in question."[70]

Regrettably, there seems to be no list naming these early Indian bookdealers in Calcutta. However, it is possible that as early as 1814 and certainly by 1816, Lal Lul Lal and other members of the Sanskrit Press were operating one such business in north Calcutta.[71] The manager or owner of the firm was a man named Ganga Kishor Bhattacharya, who had learned printing and publishing at Serampore Mission Press[72] and had then decided to come to Calcutta to try his luck in the rapidly growing book business.[73] A short biographical sketch of Ganga Kishor appeared in the quarterly series of the *Friend of India* in 1820:

> The first Hindoo who established a press in Calcutta was Babooram, a native of Hindoosthan. . . . He was followed by Ganga Kishore, formerly employed at Serampore Press, who appears to have been the first who conceived the idea of printing as a means of acquiring wealth. To ascertain the pulse of the Hindoo public, he printed several works at the press of a European [Ferris and Company] for which having obtained a ready sale, he established an office of his own, and opened a book-shop. For more than six years, he continued to print in Calcutta various works in the Bengalee language, but having disagreed with his coadjutor, he has now removed his press to his native village. He appointed agents in the Chief towns and villages in Bengal, from whom his books

[67] PCFW, DLXIII (July 18, 1814), 174.
[68] *Ibid.*
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] *Ibid.*
[71] B. N. Bandyopādhyāy, *Ganga Kiśor Bhattāchāryya* (S-s-c series; 1928), pp. 48–49.
[72] *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.
[73] *Ibid.*

were purchased with great avidity; and within a fortnight after the publication from the Serampore Press of the *Samachar Durpan*, the first Native Weekly Journal printed in India, he published another which we hear has since failed.[74]

Ramram Basu, perhaps the best known of the Fort William pundits, was a *Bangaja Kayastha* by caste. Of the three Bengali specialists of the period, two maintain that he was born in 1757, while the third suggests 1774 or even 1780.[75] His place of birth is commonly given as Chinsura, and his early years were spent in a village in the Twenty-four Pargannas.[76] Ramram's association with Europeans apparently began in 1780 when William Chambers, Persian Interpreter to the Supreme Court and relative of Charles Grant, employed him as his private *munshi*.[77] In 1787 Ramram, through the recommendation of William Chambers, became *munshi* to John Thomas, who in Company eyes was an indigo manufacturer at Malda but who was in reality a missionary—precisely as in Carey's case seven years later.

Ramram's experiences, first in relation to Thomas and afterwards to Carey, are extremely interesting examples of acculturation. According to both Thomas and Carey, he was already receptive to Christianity. His discontent with Hinduism was shown in his fascination with Persian and Arabic on the one hand and in his sarcastic criticisms of the hated Brahmans on the other.[78] The first incident that strikingly revealed Ramram's receptive frame of mind toward Christianity occurred in June, 1788. According to C. B. Lewis, who wrote the generally reliable *Life of John Thomas*, Ramram told Thomas in June, 1788:

> He had found Jesus to be the answerer of his prayer. He had cried to Him in sickness, and a speedy cure had been granted. Towards the end of the same month, he brought Mr. Thomas "a gospel hymn of his own composing, the first ever seen or heard of in the Bengalese language,—a lyric which still holds its place in our collections of Bengali hymns." Ram Basu's early conversation beto-

[74] "On the Effect of the Native Press in India," *Friend of India*, I (September, 1820), 134–135.

[75] B. N. Bandyopādhyāẏ and S. K. Dās accept 1757, while De prefers 1774 or 1780.

[76] B. N. Bandyopādhyāẏ, *Rāmrām Basu* (S-s-c series: 1928), pp. 5–6.

[77] Dās, p. 59.

[78] Bandyopādhyāẏ, *Rāmrām Basu*, pp. 6–7.

> kened also a deep conviction of the truth of the gospel, and there was reason to hope he might soon be an acknowledged follower of Christ.[79]

When Carey arrived in Bengal in 1793, Ramram became his *munshi*.[80] Together the two men entered into a mutually advantageous relationship. Ramram taught Carey Bengali and Sanskrit and helped translate sections of the Bible into Bengali. Carey in turn taught his *munshi* English and tried at the same time to persuade him to embrace the only "true" religion. Though the two men seemed drawn to one another intellectually, Carey could not ignore the moral deficiency of his Bengali friend. In 1796, when Carey learned that his *munshi* had seduced a young widow, made her pregnant, and then had the child aborted, Carey dismissed him and wrote:

> I have been forced, for the honour of the gospel, to discharge the Moonshi, who . . . was guilty of a crime which required this step, considering the profession he had made of the gospel. The discouragement arising from this circumstance is not small, as he is certainly a man of the very best natural abilities that I have ever found among the natives, and being well acquainted with phraseology of scripture, was peculiarly fitted to assist in the translation; but I have now no hope of him.[81]

A few years later, when the College of Fort William opened its doors to Asians, Ramram Basu reappeared, settled his differences with Carey, and joined the new missionaries at Serampore in their effort to spread the Word.[82] Ramram entered a new phase of his professional evolution. He now further developed his role of intermediary by introducing and interpreting the indigenous culture to the foreigners at the College of Fort William while passing on foreign cultural influences to other Hindus by means of tracts printed at Serampore. In the process, the former tutor to a missionary now became increasingly professional in response to Fort William's institutional demands. At the same time, he developed intellectually as a result of the missionaries' persistent argumentative attacks on what they seemed to regard as his rapidly waning loyalty to Hinduism.

[79] Thomas, n.d., quoted *ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
[80] Bandyopādhyāy, *Rāmrām Basu*, pp. 11–12.
[81] *Ibid.*, p. 14.
[82] *Ibid.*

As a member of Carey's Bengali Department at the college, Ramram distinguished himself primarily as a writer of original Bengali prose, for which he was paid handsomely by the College Council.[83] The work not uncommonly considered the first piece of original prose in any modern Indian language was Ramram Basu's *Pratāpāditya Charitra* (*Historical Sketch of Raja Pratāpāditya*), which was published by Serampore Press for the college in 1802. William Carey, who won Council support for the work, believed it to be "an authentic history of the government of Bengal from the beginning of the reign of Achber to the end of that of Johangeer."[84]

Literary historians such as S. K. De rightly dismiss Ramram's *Pratāpāditya Charitra* as "one of the worst specimens of Bengali prose-writing even for this period."[85] However, from a different point of view the book was remarkable in representing the dawn of historical consciousness in Bengal. Literary scholars have periodically condemned the work for aesthetic reasons, but professional historians of Bengal have been sympathetic to Ramram's sense of history—however rudimentary in its "Persianised" form. Nikhilnath Ray's analysis of the *Pratāpāditya*, which appeared in the notes of the 1904 edition of the work,[86] and has been the model historiographic interpretation since, is valuable in depicting the modern quality in Ramram's historical writing. Ray's idea is that Ramram wrote a truly historical book even though he tended to combine "fact" with gossip or tradition. Regardless of how crude Basu was as an historian, Ray maintains, "modern research has been able to little alter what Ramram Basu wrote a century ago."[87] In short, despite Ramram's shortcomings, which were inherent in the Persian narrative-style history of the day, he was a pioneer of the "historical spirit" in Bengal.[88]

It should not be overlooked, however, that the *Pratāpāditya* was written not for fellow historians but as a much-needed textbook for William Carey's Bengali classes. Because Ramram's book was essentially a narrative of the "rise and tribulations" of a Hindu *raja*

[83] Ramram was paid 300 rupees as a bonus for his *Pratāpāditya*, PCFW, DLIX (July 18, 1803), 263.

[84] *Ibid.*

[85] De, p. 154.

[86] R. Basu, *Rājā Pratāpāditya Charitra*, ed. N. Roy (Kalikātā: Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, 1904).

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 199.

[88] *Ibid.*

of Jessore, and because such chronicles of secular rulers were part of a long tradition in Muslim India, it is difficult on the basis of this work alone to prove the influence of a European historical outlook.

Mrtyunjay Vidyalankar's *Rajaboli* (*Story of Kings*) seems far more representative of the kind of history written at the College of Fort William by Brahmans who certainly did not share in the Muslim tradition and who, as early as 1810, were not yet demonstrating what we moderns call historical consciousness. In contrast to Ramram's systematic account of recent events on the basis of documents, Mrtyunjay's *Rajaboli* was the work of an eighteenth-century pundit who had attempted to crystallize his random thinking on the Hindu past into the concrete form of the printed word.

Published in 1808, *Rajaboli* seems curiously uninfluenced by the findings and techniques of Orientalist scholarship. Mrtyunjay seemed pedantic without being erudite; he ignored numismatic and other evidence in favor of the religious texts and mythological accounts; and he made no distinction between the mythological and verifiable event. Much of his history was anecdotal—the commonplace tales of Hindu, Muslim, and British heroes from Kurukshetra to Plassey.

On the other hand, the *Rajaboli* is important as a document revealing the extent and kinds of historical knowledge prevalent among the eighteenth-century Hindu literati of Bengal. It is significant, for example, that little or nothing was said about Buddhist India, Asoka, the Indo-Greek Bactrian kingdoms, or the age of the Guptas. Of course, considering that accurate knowledge of pre-Muslim India had long since ceased to be transmitted and was still to be rediscovered as scholarship advanced in the nineteenth-century, Mrtyunjay could not have been expected to know about any of this ancient history. Mrtyunjay was, nevertheless, aware of the Sena dynasty, though his primary interest was in reconstructing the legend of the Brahmans invited to Bengal from Kanauj in the tenth century.[89] He considered the Marathas as alien plunderers and viewed their presence in Bengal as sheer aggression.[90] Finally, it might be of some interest to note Mrtyunjay's attitude toward the rise of the British in Bengal. As a Hindu, he probably favored the British over the Muslims, although there is little in the *Rajaboli* to

[89] M. Vidvālankār, "Rājabali," *Mrtyuñjaỳ granthābalī*, ed. B. N. Bandyopādhyāỳ (Kalikātā: Rañjan Pābliśim Haus, 1939), pp. 137–138.
[90] *Ibid.*, pp. 181–182.

suggest it. Writing a generation or so before political consciousness awakened and at least two generations before the advent of national consciousness, Mrtyunjay matter-of-factly recorded the events "leading up to the establishment of the Company's ownership of Bengal."[91]

By and large, the historical writing of the rising Bengali intelligentsia in the first decade of the century did not express what was most immediate in their intellectual awakening. In Ramram, no less than in Rammohun, what was most deeply felt was best mirrored in the literature of spiritual crisis that grew out of the search for a new cultural identity.

In an early tract for Serampore Mission, to which Ramram gave the title *Jñānodoy* (*Dawn of Knowledge*), all the prevailing social and religious errors of Hindu Bengal were exposed with an almost evangelical indignation.[92] The indignation had a peculiarly middle-class tone to it whenever Ramram attacked the twin evils of moral laxity and idolatry. In this Christian-inspired puritanical reaction we can find the germ of an idea generally attributed to Rammohun Roy and finally institutionalized by Debendranath Tagore as the *Brahmo Samaj*. Ramram had already endowed the Vedic Brahma with the attributes of Jehovah, and in Ramram we have reached the first stage leading to the discovery or invention of a monotheistic tradition in Hinduism.[93]

In this pamphlet also, Ramram, a *Kayastha*, attacked the Brahmans, who were portrayed as conspiring, like the medieval Roman Catholic clergy, to enshroud the world in ignorance and darkness.[94] When Carey sent the pamphlet to Britain, he wrote: "We have another piece nearly ready, written by a native (Ram Bashu), exposing the folly and danger of the Hindu system. This is peculiarly pointed against Brahmunism, something like those thundering addresses against the idle, corrupt, and ignorant clergy of the Church of Rome at the commencement of the reformation. . . ."[95]

During the next few years, Ramram composed several short pieces on Christ's message and translated a Bengali version of a *Life of Christ in Verse*.[96] But he continually resisted actual conver-

[91] *Ibid.*, p. 189.
[92] B. N. Banhyopādhyāy, *Rāmrām Basu* (S-s-c series, 1928), pp. 16–18.
[93] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[94] *Ibid.*
[95] William Carey, October 10, 1800, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 16.
[96] Fragments given in *ibid.*, p. 16.

sion and died a Hindu. "Oh Sir! I am most wretched," he wrote once in Bengali to a leading Baptist in England. "I understand something of the gospel, and can make it known a little to others, but I cannot leave my caste. This is my great difficulty. . . ."[97]

In these basic features of Ramram's situation we can recognize circumstances similar to those of at least a dozen members of the Bengali intelligentsia later in the century. Among this intelligentsia, Rammohun Roy seems Ramram's true successor. Both preferred to reinterpret their own religious tradition rather than to accept an alien faith. Both chose the more uncertain path of cultural purification and condemned members of their own elitist class for rationalizing the existence of moral and social evil. In consequence, both shared the contempt of the Brahman community. Their growing cultural alienation and marginality marked them as intelligentsia. William Carey, who himself felt an increasing disaffiliation with the Baptists in England, was sympathetically aware of the dilemma of the new type of intellectual who was precariously straddling two worlds. He wrote of Ramram in 1802:

> Poor Ram Bashoo is always glad to give the Brahmans a . . . blow where he has the opportunity but I fear he is an unenvied man. He is to us what Erasmus was to the Reformation. It would entertain you to see the Brahmans wheel off to the other side of the way when we are disputing in the Streets; and it would grieve you to hear the torrents of abuse and obscenity with which the vile sort frequently assault us. . . . God has however broke the infernal seclusion and I trust a spark is struck in Bengal which will never be extinguished.[98]

[97] College Lane Chapel, Northampton. Letter dated March 7, 1801, from Ramram Basu to Ryland in Northampton Collection of Serampore Letters.
[98] Carey to Fuller, January 21, 1802, Carey Letters.

PART IV

The Evangelical Challenge in London and the Orientalist Response in Calcutta 1800-1827

Let me tell you that neither are we 'devils', as the missionaries tell the world we are, nor are they 'angels,' as they claim to be. The less the missionaries talk of immorality, infanticide, and the evils of the Hindu marriage system, the better for them . . . If, foreign friends, you come with genuine sympathy to help and not to destroy, god-speed to you. But if by abuses incessantly hurled against the head of a prostrate race in season and out of season, you mean only the triumphant assertion of the moral superiority of your own nation, let me tell you plainly, if such a comparison be instituted with any amount of justice, the Hindu will be found a head and shoulders above all other nations in the world as a moral race.

—VIVEKANANDA

IX

Evangelical Anti-Hinduism and the Polarization of Cultural Policy for India

Wellesley's proposal for establishing the college in Calcutta arrived in London at almost the same time that classes at the college were expected to begin. The immediate reaction to Wellesley's pet educational scheme was critical, but the real issue seemed to be Wellesley's tactlessness and haste in making a decision without first gaining the approval of the government and the Company's Directors at home. The government seemed as worried about the spread of French radicalism in India as was Wellesley. Unlike Wellesley, however, it saw the proposed college as a possible breeding ground for Jacobins. Dundas, still President of the Board of Control, wrote to the governor-general: "Such an assemblage of literary and philosophical men would . . . degenerate into a school of Jacobinism in India. I hate Jacobinism everywhere . . . but in India I should consider it as the Devil itself and to be guarded against with equal assiduity."[1]

The Board was nevertheless ready to sanction Wellesley's scheme, and such support usually meant quick ratification. Since 1788 Dundas had slowly been becoming the supreme power in deciding India policy, but it was Wellesley's misfortune that Dundas was physically exhausted by 1800 and had been warned that the slightest overexertion might bring about his death. On February

[1] British Museum, *Additional Manuscripts* 37275, f. 191, September 4, 1800, quoted in Philips, p. 125.

9, 1801, Dundas informed his superiors that he intended to retire that year,[2] at the very time that Wellesley most needed support for his college.

Wellesley was unfortunate for another reason that was perhaps the most important of all factors involved in the ultimate disposition of the College of Fort William. Since the Charter Renewal Act of 1793, the Company had been fighting vigorously to protect its economic interest in the East against the encroachment of private merchants determined to break the Company's trade monopoly. The war against France compounded the problem by throwing open the India trade to neutral nations such as the United States. The established shipping interests expressed their grievances through a powerful group within the Court of Directors. The situation grew more and more acute between 1793 and 1800. By 1799, the volume of shipments of Indian goods to Europe by foreign traders nearly equaled that of the Company.[3] In the following year, foreign traders, mostly American, doubled the value of their trade in Calcutta.[4]

Dundas and Wellesley were opposed to the shipping interests, for they believed that the Company was no longer in a position to monopolize the India trade to the advantage of British interests. The important objective was to keep British capital in British hands—even if these were private hands. Therefore both men strongly advocated India-built shipping for the Indian export trade.[5]

During the summer and early fall of 1800, the fate of the College of Fort William became inextricably interwoven with the complex private-trade question. At the very time that the Court of Directors was examining Wellesley's college scheme in detail, news reached London that the governor-general had dispatched India-built ships to carry home part of the export trade while at the same time dispatching some of the regular ships of the Company from Calcutta only half-loaded.[6] At about the same time the Court also learned of the deficit consequent to Wellesley's victory over Tipu Sultan.[7] So great was the impact of these developments that there took

[2] Letter from Board to Court, 1, f, 518, n.d. cited *ibid.*, p. 111.

[3] *British Parliamentary History*, XXXIV, 566, March 12, 1799, cited *ibid.*, p. 106.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 107.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 108.

[6] British Museum, *Additional Manuscripts* 37282, f. 162, July 15, 1800, cited *ibid.*, p. 109.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

place within the Direction a realignment of forces that ultimately undermined Dundas's power and Wellesley's educational policy. Charles Grant, leader of the neutral clique, abandoned his neutrality and seized this opportunity to join the mounting agitation against the Dundas-Wellesley coalition.[8] For the moment the College of Fort William had become a political football in a larger economic struggle between members of the Court of Directors and the Board of Control.

In the spring of 1803, when London was still undecided as to whether a college should be established in Calcutta, Wellesley had already invested £224,566 in the effort to give institutional form to his ideal.[9] Between 1802 and 1805 the college issue became so crucial that Wellesley more than once threatened to come to London and personally plead his case before Parliament.[10] The controversy, which had begun over Wellesley's unpopular trade policy, slowly acquired other aspects until the College of Fort William became a symbol in the conflict of British cultural attitudes toward India. "The College must stand," Wellesley warned, "or the Empire must fall."[11]

In January, 1802, the Court of Directors believed the problem might be solved simply by reestablishing Gilchrist's seminary.[12] The real issue that angered the old shipping interests was Wellesley's inimical trade practices.[13] So long as the governor-general persisted in his hostile policy aimed at destroying Company shipping, any other scheme of his would inevitably be met with disfavor. Wellesley was well aware of his predicament. In a letter to Castlereagh, who had become President of the Board in June, 1802, he wrote, "I apprehend that my conduct on the question of private trade has been the main source of the virulence which has been betrayed by the Court on various other topics."[14]

On August 5, 1802, Wellesley sent a long and eloquent letter to

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 109.

[9] C. Prakash, "Establishment of Fort William College," *Calcutta Review*, LXI (June, 1934), 171.

[10] Embree, p. 193.

[11] Wellesley to David Scott, August 12, 1802, quoted in *Memoirs and Correspondence of Wellesley*, comp. R. R. Pearce (London: Richard Bentley, 1846), II, 212.

[12] Court to Wellesley, January 22, 1802, quoted in G. S. A. Ranking, "History of the College of Fort William," *Bengal Past and Present*, VII (January, 1911), 22.

[13] Philips, p. 120.

[14] Wellesley to Castlereagh, n.d., quoted *ibid.*, p. 120.

Castlereagh appealing to him, as Wellesley had done earlier to Dundas, to save the college in its entirety.[15] In it, he defended his scheme along familiar lines, justified its expense, and warned of the Court's shortsighted mercantile mentality, which seemed to him "penny-wise and pound-foolish."[16]

Wellesley's dispatches at this time are important in reflecting his concept of government, which he closely associated with the main purpose of the college. His basic argument was that the Company now had a "sacred trust of Governing an Extensive and Populous Empire" which he considered a "permanent succession."[17] The foundation of the Empire should rest "on internal order," "a uniform and impartial administration of justice," a "prudent and temperate system of revenue," "the encouragement and protection of industry, agriculture, manufacturing and commerce," and the "judicious management of financial resources."[18] These objectives would never be attained unless regular training of a cadre of civil servants was assured at the College of Fort William. According to Wellesley: "Many of these objects have already been accomplished by the effects of the institution under the eyes of this Government, and all of them promise to be secured by the continuance and stability of the same system of discipline and study."[19]

In a private letter to the Earl of Dartmouth dated August 5, 1802, Wellesley sought to preserve his scheme by enlisting the support of high officials in the British government. He made it quite clear that he considered the college the most important achievement of his administration. After threatening to take the issue before Parliament if the Court abolished the college, he wrote: "So convinced am I of the necessity of this institution, that I am determined to devote the remainder of my political life to the object of establishing it, as the greatest benefit which can be imparted to the public service in India, and as the best security which can be provided for the welfare of our native subjects."[20]

[15] Wellesley to Castlereagh, August 5, 1802, quoted in Roebuck, pp. xxvii–xxxix.

[16] Wellesley to Castlereagh, August 5, 1802, quoted in Ranking, *Bengal Past and Present*, VII, 23.

[17] *Letters of the Marquis Wellesley Respecting the College of Fort William*, Vol. LXXV of *India Office Library Tracts* (London: J. Hatchard, 1812), p. 27.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[19] Despatch from Wellesley to Court, August 5, 1802, quoted in *Memoirs of Wellesley*, p. 209.

[20] Wellesley to Dartmouth, August 5, 1802, quoted *ibid.*, p. 214.

Wellesley's August 5 letter to the Board reached London in January of 1803 and Castlereagh immediately decided to defend Wellesley's general policies—including the appeal to save the college.[21] Years earlier, under the powerful Dundas, such support was an assurance of success. Now the shipping interests in the Court had become powerful and were successfully resisting the Board's encouragement of private trade.[22] In addition, Wellesley's aristocratic insinuations about the Directors' mercantile mentality seemed to fan the flames of their collective indignation. In July of that year the Directors wrote to the Board: "The Court distinctly and strenuously disclaims the imputation . . . that they are governed in this matter by the narrow views of commercial habits. It is a stale and unjust imputation . . . their establishments civil and military in India are on a scale more ample probably than that of any state in the world."[23]

The Court, powerful as it was, now found itself vulnerable on the increasingly well-publicized need for civil-service reform.[24] Not only did Wellesley have the support of the Board and many high-ranking government officials, but he had taken the initiative in offering an undeniably sensible educational program. It was also no longer possible to react only in a negative manner to Wellesley's well-documented and well-articulated challenge. The Court needed its own plan—a plan that would thwart Wellesley on the one hand while adapting his basic idea to the Court's advantage on the other.

It was Charles Grant who came forward to submit a brilliant solution to the thorny problem. After his return to England in 1794, Grant immediately began promoting Christian influence in India by associating himself with the Clapham sect. From his seat on the Court of Directors during the next few years, Grant advocated a bishopric for Calcutta, freedom of entry and movement for missionaries in India, and the admission of teachers there "to transform and deliver a whole people from superstition to light through the educational process."[25] With his Clapham neighbors, Wilberforce, Shore, Zachary Macaulay, Henry Thornton, and John Venn, Grant effectively enunciated for the first time the evangelical mission of Britain, modeled on Rome's example of civilizing the

[21] Philips, p. 127.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] Court to Board, July 1, 1803, quoted *ibid.*, p. 128.
[24] Embree, p. 178.
[25] Stokes, p. 30.

world.[26] The challenge to the Hastings-Wellesley policy of rapprochement with indigenous culture had begun in earnest.

Unlike most of his peers sitting in the Court, Grant represented an ideology that had earned him a reputation both as a reformer and as an intellectual.[27] His views on the necessity of government-sponsored education in British India were well known, and it was difficult to accuse him of shallow commercialism. As a matter of fact, there is some evidence to suggest that Wellesley modified his college establishment to win Grant's support.[28] At the helm of the college, Wellesley put Brown and Buchanan, two clergymen who were sent to Bengal by Grant and who corresponded with him regularly.

However, neither clergymen in high positions nor timely pious utterances by Wellesley satisfied Grant. Many writers have analyzed the Wellesley-Grant feud in terms of economics, administration, and the general difference of political views.[29] They have underestimated the basically irreconcilable cultural positions these two men held with reference to India. Both men agreed on the necessity for a highly trained civil-service elite relating intimately with the people of India in ways beneficial both to Britain and her subjects. Wellesley, whatever his original motives, placed himself squarely in the Hastings-Jones tradition by sponsoring an Orientalist kind of approach that stressed acculturation.

To Charles Grant, an avowed Evangelical, such cultural relativity or pluralism was alien and distasteful. In his mind, Indian civilization was barbaric because its religion was degrading.[30] It was both dangerous and a violation of the Christian spirit even to tolerate such a culture.[31] The British civil servant was to be an agent of cultural change and not an agent in the perpetuation of Hinduism as then conceived or even in its revivalistic form. He feared that the kind of flirtation with Orientalism encouraged

[26] N. K. Sinha, "Beginning of Western Education," *Hundred Years of the University of Calcutta*, I, 5.

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 95–120, 141–57.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. 189.

[29] For an economic interpretation of the Grant–Wellesley feud, see Philips, pp. 118–151; for a view on administrative and political differences, see Embree, pp. 178–230; for Grant's cultural attitudes toward India, see Stokes, pp. 30–35.

[30] Embree, p. 148.

[31] *Ibid.*

under Warren Hastings might lead to the "Indianization" of British youth. They might undergo an "assimilation to Eastern opinions" instead of "retaining all the distinctions of our national principles, characters and usages."[32]

Grant was apparently not to be misled by the letters he received from those of Wellesley's men who were also friendly to himself and who predicted that the college would be the instrument for the evangelization of India.[33] His knowledge of the real nature of Wellesley's college was excellent. Reports on the cultivation and dissemination of profane Oriental literature at Serampore, for example, must have made him wonder whether the college was helping to evangelize India or to Indianize Evangelicals.

On September 19, 1804, the Committee of Correspondence was asked by the Court to offer suggestions on a revised plan for training Company servants.[34] Two weeks later the Committee recommended the establishment of an institution in England for educating candidates for the Company's service. According to Ainslee Embree, "there was never any question in the minds of those familiar with the Company's administration that Grant was the driving force behind the move to establish a College and was the author of the Report that outlined its constitution."[35] The Court gave the scheme its immediate approval.[36] On September 10, 1805, Castlereagh finally agreed to the Court plan and Haileybury College was on the way to being founded.[37]

Grant did not abolish the College of Fort William; he seemed satisfied, for the moment, to transfer the European part of the institution's curriculum from Calcutta to Hertford. He also shifted the burden of student orientation from the shoulders of the Orientalists, who dominated the Calcutta college, to those of Cambridge clergymen, who were expected to indoctrinate the boys well in England before sending them off to India. Grant's report provided that "Overarching the whole curriculum . . . was to be a concern for religion and morality, for without a full attachment to the principles and truths of the Christian faith . . . the young civil servants

[32] Extract from Public Letter to Bengal, May 23, 1798, quoted *ibid.*, p. 190.

[33] *Memorial Sketches of the Reverend David Brown*, pp. 302–304.

[34] Minutes and Reports of the Committee of Haileybury College, I (October 26, 1804), 1–2, cited by Embree, p. 195.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] *Ibid.*

[37] Board Minutes, 3, f. 141 (September 10, 1805), cited by Philips, p. 130.

would not be able to fulfil their trust either to Great Britain or the people of India."[38]

The massacre at Vellore in 1806 created a furor in England which led to a polarization of ideas between Orientalists and Evangelicals concerning the best means of morally and culturally rehabilitating the Hindus. The debate was carried on between 1807 and 1813 in the Court of Directors, in Parliament, and by means of books, pamphlets, and petitions which brought the Hindu and missionary questions into print for the first time before the English public.

In March, 1807, Elphinstone, Chairman of the Court of Directors, informed the younger Dundas, President of the Board, that the Vellore mutiny seemed to have originated in "opposition to the innovations in the customs and religious institutions of the sepoys, fanned to heat by general rumors of their forced conversion to Christianity and by the family and adherents of Tipu Sultan at Vellore."[39]

A month later the Court decided that both Cradock, the Vellore commandant, and Bentinck, the governor of Madras, had been guilty of forcing the sepoys to change their personal habits of dress and hygiene against their will and especially reprimanded Bentinck for neglecting to profit from previous signs of discontent.[40] Both men were immediately recalled.

Grant and Parry, the two leading Evangelicals in the Court, tried to belittle any attempt to associate the mutiny with missionary activity. They were apparently succeeding well when Thomas Twining, a powerful enemy of Grant, decided to implicate the missionaries publicly in the debate. Twining, who had served in the Bengal civil service from 1792 to 1805, did not choose so much to defend the validity of Hinduism in his pamphlet as to warn the Court against the inevitable revolution that would result from missionary interference: "If ever the fatal day shall arrive when religious innovation shall set her foot in that country, indignation will spread from one end of Hindoostan to the other; and the arms of fifty millions of people will drive us from that portion of the globe with

[38] Minutes and Reports of the Committee of Haileybury College, October 26, 1804, cited by Embree, p. 198.
[39] Philips, p. 160.
[40] *Ibid.*, p. 161.

as much ease as the sand of the desert is scattered by the wind. . . ."[41]

Twining's blast against the missionary party produced what is generally referred to as a "pamphlet war, in which over twenty-five writers took part."[42] From the single issue of the Vellore Mutiny, the argument developed into a full altercation in which the Orientalism of the Asiatic Society, the Bengal Civil Service, and the College of Fort William were confronted by the evangelical attitudes of the Grant-Parry-Wilberforce faction, the Baptist Mission Society, and the Foreign Bible Society. Grant's powerful position in the Court of Directors (maintained successfully since 1804) enabled him to bring the matter to a head in January of 1808. He defeated his antagonists 13 to 7 "in favor of the status quo as it affected the missionaries."[43] Toone reported to his Orientalist colleague Warren Hastings: "We were beat . . . the Saints are elevated. I never loved them, but now I detest them."[44]

Though the missionary problem was temporarily settled within the Court of Directors, the pamphlet war had, in fact, just begun. Major Scott Waring, a former member of Warren Hasting's personal staff in Bengal and later a Member of Parliament, was a fiery, controversial figure. Quite willing to represent Orientalism openly, he wrote a number of powerfully worded tracts filled with extreme allegations. First he reiterated Twining's basic position that "any attempts to interfere with the religion, the laws, or the local customs of India, must inevitably tend to the destruction of the British powers."[45] Then he implied that the massacre at Vellore was caused by a number of Baptist Missionaries who "appear to be illiterate, ignorant and as enthusiastic as the wildest devotees among the Hindoos."[46]

Interestingly enough, it was Scott Waring, presumably searching for a scapegoat, who helped to bring the name of William Carey to the attention of the English public: "The head of this

[41] T. Twining, "Letter to the Chairman on the Danger of Interfering in the Religious Opinions of the Natives in India," quoted in Marshman, I, 335.

[42] Philips, p. 164.

[43] *Ibid.*

[44] Toone to Hastings, *Additional Manuscripts*, 29183, f. 153 (January 30, 1808), quoted *ibid.*

[45] S. Waring, "Observations on the present state of the East India Company," n.d., quoted in Marshman, I, 340.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 342.

mission is a Mr. William Carey who enjoys a salary from the Company of eight hundred pounds a year, as teacher of the Bengalee and Sanscrit languages."[47] Waring was puzzled as to how a missionary—a Baptist one at that—who had no legal right to be in India was actually deriving money from the Company.[48] He found himself at a loss to understand precisely what Carey's title was: in the Company's list, he was styled Mr. William Carey; in the college he was known as Professor Carey; while the "Bible Society have given him the dignified title of 'Reverend.' "[49]

Scott Waring viewed with alarm what he described as a conspiracy between the Bible Society, the Serampore Mission, and the Evangelicals, all of whom seemed determined to undermine British rule in India. He advocated the immediate recall of these "ignorant and bigoted sectarian English Missionaries."[50] In a later pamphlet Waring modified his stand concerning Carey's ignorance or lack of intelligence. He now claimed to have evidence that Carey was "the brains" behind a "conspiracy" at Serampore in 1806:

> He may be a dissenter of great piety, a good man and a competent teacher of the Bengalee, Sanscrit, and Mahratta languages in the College of Fort William, but he had the presumption to act in defiance of the fixed regulations of the Company; and the time he chose to act with so much contumacy was when Lord Wellesley had resigned the Government, when Lord Cornwallis was dying at Ghazeepure, when Sir George Barlow was on his way to Benares, and Mr. Udney was left in the sole charge of the Government.[51]

These accusations by Waring against the Serampore missionary aroused Andrew Fuller of the Baptist Mission Society to defend Carey and his colleagues. In three *Apologies for the Late Christian Missions to India*, Fuller (with the benefit of Carey's voluminous correspondence before him) was perhaps in the best position of anyone then in England to represent and defend the Serampore trio. Fuller's main purpose was to demonstrate that the charge of missionary conspiracy was baseless and that the Baptists had nothing at all to do with Vellore. Then he sought to show that, though Carey was a professor at Fort William, he was basically a mission-

[47] S. Waring, "Observations," n.d., quoted in Fuller, *Complete Works*, p. 582.
[48] *Ibid.*
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] *Ibid.*, p. 588.
[51] S. Waring, "Observations," n.d., quoted in Marshman, I, 350.

ary working not for rebellion against the British government but for spreading "the mild and tolerant spirit of Christianity."[52] If there was a conspiracy, Fuller argued, it was hatched by deists against the followers of true religion. Carey had reported to him in a letter of February 13, 1807, that "India swarms with deists; and deists are in my opinion, the most intolerant of mankind. Their great desire is to exterminate true religion from the earth. I consider the alarms which have been spread through India as the fabrications of these men. . . ."[53]

Fuller argued that the Twinings and the Warings were dangerously misleading because they believed that Hindoostan's present condition, in which millions suffered under what he held to be the evils of Hinduism, was more conducive to the stability of British rule than a Hindustan whose enlightened subjects were bound to England by a unity of the Christian spirit. He attempted to reassure people who still feared an uprising by Hindus by a portrayal of Hindu social structure, as he saw it:

> Hindoos resemble an immense number of particles of sand, which are incapable of forming a solid mass. There is no bond of union among them, nor any principle capable of effecting it. Their hierarchy has no head, no influential body, no subordinate orders. The brahmans, as well as the nation at large, are a vast number of disconnected atoms, totally incapable of cohesion. . . . When to this are added their natural imbecility, and the enervating influence of Climate, it will be evident that nothing is less to be apprehended than a steady concerted opposition to the spread of Christianity. . . .[54]

The Orientalists were never as well organized as the Evangelical forces. Apparently apprehensive of being condemned as anti-Christian during a period of hostility in England to the ideals of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, the Orientalists gave anonymous support to those of their comrades who did expose themselves in print. Fuller was obviously disturbed by men who may well have been friends or even students of William Carey at the College of Fort William and who were now covertly defending Hinduism against the anti-Hindu onslaught of the missionaries.[55] Fuller charged that behind Waring and other Orientalists stood "many former recently returned civil servants with an anti-mission

[52] Fuller, *Complete Works*, p. 576.
[53] Carey to Fuller, February 13, 1807, quoted *ibid.*, p. 576.
[54] *Ibid.*, p. 579.
[55] *Ibid.*, p. 583.

bias":[56] "I know not who these gentlemen are, and therefore can have no personal disrespect to any of them: but whosoever they be, I have no scruple in saying that their reports, as given in the performance before me, are utterly unworthy of credit."[57]

As the controversy continued, the pamphlet that epitomized the Orientalist view was written by Colonel "Hindoo" Stewart, whose *Vindications of the Hindoos, by a Bengal Officer* greatly infuriated the opposition because of its frank support of Hindu civilization. Stewart's thesis was that any attempt to convert the Hindus "must inevitably prove abortive," because "on the enlarged principles of moral reasoning, Hinduism little needs the meliorating hand of Christianity to render its votaries a sufficiently correct and moral people for all the useful purposes of a civilized society."[58] Stewart not only accepted the Hindu pantheon as composed of gods who represent "types of virtue," but also defended the theory of transmigration of the soul over the Christian notion of heaven and hell.[59] On the subject of Hindu mythology, which missionaries ridiculed at every opportunity, Stewart commented: "Whenever I look around me, in the vast region of Hindoo Mythology, I discover piety in the garb of allegory: and I see Morality, at every turn, blended with every tale; and, as far as I can rely on my own judgement, it appears the most complete and ample system of Moral Allegory that the world has ever produced."[60]

Stewart did not believe that Hinduism encouraged idolatry. It was true that Hindus worshipped the Diety through images, but "we satisfactorily learn from the Geeta, that it is not the mere images, but the invisible spirit, that they thus worship."[61] Stewart's cultural attitude was, in fact, the outspoken expression of an "Indianized" Englishman, not uncommon since the period of Warren Hastings, and very hostile to the ethnocentric attitudes of the Evangelicals.

Stewart, as in the case of all Indophiles and Orientalists, had to face the problem of Hindu decay evident at that time. His own solution to this problem was remarkably similar to that of the College of Fort William students, as expressed in their disputations.

[56] *Ibid.*

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] Colonel Stewart, *Vindication of the Hindoos, by a Bengal Officer* (London: n.p., 1808), p. 9.

[59] *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

Stewart's sources of information were clearly the scholarly works of the Asiatic Society in Calcutta. "That there are many reprehensible customs among the Hindoos, the mere offspring of superstition, cannot, unhappily, be denied," Stewart wrote.[62] However, he pointed out that the scriptures of the Hindus, particularly the Vedas, do not enjoin such practices but demonstrate (as Colebrooke reported in 1801 and 1805)[63] the unity of the Godhead.[64] In Stewart's opinion, cultural change must not be imposed upon the Hindus by the intrusion of alien institutions, thoughts, or values but must come through a reform of the indigenous civilization: "I would endeavour to enlighten them on these points, through the medium of their priests. An injunction from the seat of Government, to the Colleges of Nuddeah, Benares, and other places, to take into consideration the obnoxious points that grate the feelings of humanity, would be an expedient of more effect than the prohibitionary mandate of our Government."[65]

The controversy reached Parliament when the Company's charter came up for renewal in 1813. Former governors-general such as Hastings, John Shore (later Lord Teignmouth), and Wellesley joined the throng of Anglicists and Orientalists arguing the kind and degree of cultural change that should be envisaged under the Charter Renewal Act. Hastings argued quite naturally for the Orientalist position of rehabilitating Hindu civilization from within, while advocating strict neutrality on the part of the Indian government in the support of mission activity.[66] Lord Teignmouth, President of the Foreign Bible Society and a resident of Clapham since 1802,[67] supported the Evangelical posture, but with moderation. He maintained that it was quite ridiculous to believe that Hindus would not embrace another religion, since the Indian Muslims were once probably Hindus.[68] As a Clapham Evangelical, he based his defense of missionary activity on the great need among Hindus for moral reform.[69] Only the strong ethical content of

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[63] *Supra*, pp. 40–41.
[64] Stewart, p. 69.
[65] *Ibid.*, p.70.
[66] *Hastings Evidence before Parliamentary Committee on Charter*, March 30, 1813, cited in Marshman, II, 12–14.
[67] *Memoir of the Life and Correspondence of John, Lord Teignmouth*, p. 35.
[68] *Ibid.*, p. 141.
[69] *Ibid.*, pp. 142–143.

Christianity could eradicate the deeply rooted deceit, obscenity, and tendency toward corruption that he found so common in Hindus.[70] Wellesley, though defending the Serampore missionaries whom he had supported in the past, seemed more concerned with rehabilitating the College of Fort William into the institution that it was before 1807. He actually published a collection of his papers on the subject as a reminder of his formerly glorious "university of the East."[71]

The two men most effective in winning Parliament over to the Evangelical cause were Charles Grant and William Wilberforce. Both had similar attitudes toward Hinduism, and it is not unlikely that the active Wilberforce, who had little time for direct experience with India, derived both his information and his prejudices from Grant. The writings and speeches of the two men portrayed Hinduism as rotten to the core and incapable of any sort of restoration, reform, or renaissance. As Wilberforce argued in his famous speech before Parliament in June, 1813, "The Hindu divinities were absolute monsters of lust, injustice, wickedness and cruelty. In short, their religious system is one grand abomination."[72]

It was Grant who supplied Parliament with a reform program and Wilberforce who provided the organizational experience gained in twenty-eight years of championing unpopular causes of a philanthropic nature.[73] The differences between the two men are significant. Grant was a veteran India man with an economic and political interest in Company affairs. His scheme for Anglicizing the inhabitants of India was fully expounded in the *Observations on the State of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain*, which Grant submitted to Parliament in 1813.[74] Grant may have sincerely believed that the permanence of British rule in India was

[70] *Ibid.*

[71] *Letters of the Marquis Wellesley Respecting the College of Fort William*, Vol. LXXV of *India Office Library Tracts* (London: J. Hatchard, 1812).

[72] Great Britain, *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, XXVI (June 22, 1813), 164.

[73] The Evangelical Party was formed in 1785, the same year in which Wilberforce entered Parliament for the first time as a Member from Hull. See F. K. Brown, *Fathers of the Victorians: The Age of Wilberforce* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 149.

[74] The *Observations* were largely completed by 1792, printed privately in 1797, and submitted to Parliament as evidence for Charter-renewal agitation in 1813–1832.

not possible unless the subject peoples were converted to Christianity, thereby establishing unbreakable ties between the two nations. English education and Christian conversion would also make the people more industrious, help eliminate poverty, and, incidentally, create a market for British manufacturers.[75]

Grant, an influential Director in the Court, expostulated the Evangelical cause for India out of practical motivations, but Wilberforce acted apparently from the inner promptings of a man constantly and unyieldingly at war with the world's moral corruption. For Wilberforce, cultural change in India was but one of dozens of philanthropic causes for which he had struggled since the formation of the Evangelical party in 1785. Among the original Evangelicals–Hannah Moore, John Thornton, and John Newton –organized opposition to moral corruption was the answer both to the Enlightenment and to French revolutionary thought.[76] It should not be overlooked that the Wilberforce who concerned himself with the liberty of the African slaves and the heathen millions of India was the same Wilberforce who repudiated liberty in England by supporting the acts of repression and the suspension of habeas corpus.[77]

Liberals and Radicals despised him and called him a hypocrite.[78] "Oh, that our skin were black" Daniel O'Connell exclaimed on behalf of the Irish peasantry while giving vent to his dislike of the great philanthropist.[79] Nor should it be overlooked that one of the works condemned as "licentious" by a Wilberforce moral reform organization was Tom Paine's *Age of Reason.*[80]

Wilberforce, a crippled, half-blind little man with an oratorical gift, was a member of at least seventy philanthropic organizations primarily interested in fighting moral corruption in England.[81] Though many missionaries such as Ward were quick to point out the wretched position of women in India, Evangelicals never offered a satisfactory explanation as to why this same wretchedness existed in a Christian country such as England. At the same time

[75] Great Britain, *Parliamentary Papers*, Vol. X, Paper 282 (1812–1813), C. Grant, "Observations on the State of Society Among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain," p. 77.

[76] Brown, p. 3.

[77] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[78] *Ibid.*, p. 112.

[79] *Ibid.*, p. 113.

[80] *Ibid.*, p. 86.

[81] *Ibid.*, p. 71.

that Wilberforce and Grant fought so desperately to "save" Hindu women, London was swarming with at least 50,000 prostitutes and 400 individuals who "made their living by getting females from eleven to fourteen years old for prostitution."[82] As a point of fact, Wilberforce and his associates did not overlook England in their scathing condemnation of world-wide immorality. Britain was "One great lazar-house of moral and intellectual disease . . . one hideous bloated mass of sin and suffering—one festering heap of corruption infecting the wholesome air which breathes upon it, and diffusing all around the contagion and terror of its example."[83]

Clearly, then, Wilberforce viewed Hindu decadence from the same standpoint of moral indignation that reprehended the ethical disease of his own countrymen. After his successful campaign in 1807 for the abolition of the slave trade,[84] he sought to lay the foundation for the "communication to our Indian fellow-subjects of Christian light and moral improvement."[85] Knowing full well the power of public opinion, he appealed to the organizations that had known him for years and had learned to respect what William Pitt had called "the greatest natural eloquence in English."[86] Between March and June, 1813, the months during which Parliamentary committees were investigating the "missionary and Hindu questions," Wilberforce had received 837 petitions from societies throughout the realm supporting the Evangelical position on India.[87] This extraordinary manifestation of pressure politics in a free society had a profound effect on the government. On May 26 the Earl of Buckinghamshire, president of the Board of Control, informed Wilberforce that the Ministry was willing to establish a bishopric in India and to grant licenses to missionaries who wished to work there.[88]

[82] *Ibid.*, p. 25.
[83] Wilberforce, n.d., quoted *ibid.*, p. 41.
[84] *Ibid.*, pp. 70–71.
[85] Wilberforce, n.d., quoted *ibid.*, p. 108.
[86] Pitt, n.d., quoted *ibid.*, p. 3.
[87] Philips, p. 189.
[88] *Ibid.*

X

Marquess Hastings's Response in Calcutta: Orientalist Renaissance as a Popular Culture Ideal

When Lord Moira (later Marquess Hastings) succeeded Minto as governor-general on October 4, 1813, there was little to suggest that this rather obscure man of sixty would not only carry on the work of Warren Hastings and Wellesley but actually go beyond either in implementing the Orientalist credo by means of far-reaching programs of social action.[1] Much of the historical literature of British India does not mention the reform policies of Marquess Hastings and the intellectual ferment they generated in Bengal.[2] Instead, the governor-general's nine years in India are

[1] Indeed, as R. C. Majumdar has aptly documented, Hastings arrived in India with an attitude toward Hindus as hostile as the most fanatic Clapham sectarian. See R. C. Majumdar, ed., *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, Part II (History and Culture of the Indian People Series; Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1965), pp. 337–338.

[2] This is an example of the discrepancy between contemporary sources during the Orientalist period, which contain elaborate accounts of the Hastings reform measures, and the later histories of the period, which ignore them. Many Bengali scholars, interested in celebrating the events of their renaissance but unwilling to attribute its initial impetus to Hastings and his cultural policy, continually refer to the founding of Hindu College, to the Calcutta School and School Book Societies, and to a Bengali press, in a manner suggesting spontaneous inspiration in an atmosphere free of official encouragement. It is seldom noted, for example, that Bengali journalism owes its existence to Hastings, who not only advocated a free press but was the first governor-general to lift the rigorous censorship measures imposed by Wellesley in 1799.

treated as a long series of military encounters from which Hastings emerged triumphant over the Pindari menace and the last stand of Maratha power. If his cultural policy is mentioned at all, it is most often to inform the reader that "Lord Hastings refused to abolish suttee."[3]

Marquess Hastings certainly deserves far more scholarly attention than he has received.[4] Little is known of his early British background.[5] We know only that he arrived in Calcutta with a distaste for the classical heritage of Europe.[6] And instead of responding passively to the 1813 Charter Act, Hastings reinterpreted both the Evangelical victory and the Court instructions in his own way and boldly set out on a course of social action unprecedented in British colonial history.

Until the administration of Marquess Hastings, Orientalists had been encouraged to pursue high-culture scholarly interests and were urged to adopt the classical Sanskritic culture as the model for Hindu regeneration. As previously mentioned, the notion of projecting the "golden age" of the Hindus into the future by rehabilitating their existing institutions was a favorite literary theme for students and professors at the College of Fort William. The impetus for this thought came from the evolving Orientalist view of Hindu-

[3] Garrett and Thompson, p. 287. It seems evident that the poor treatment accorded Hastings since Victorian times is due to the fact that *sati* has become the great symbol of reform, and its abolition by Bentinck took place conveniently at about the time of England's first wave of political reforms in 1832. It is apparently inconceivable to the W. W. Hunters, the Morelands, the Dodwells and others that genuine reform measures could have been initiated in India before they were enacted in England by a liberal ministry.

[4] Unlike Warren Hastings, Cornwallis, and Wellesley, Marquess Hastings has not, apparently, been the subject of a single scholarly biography. There is a highly dubious account of Hastings produced during the imperialist period by a member of Britain's military elite. See George, *The Marquess of Hastings.*

[5] Born into an old aristocratic family, Hastings, like Cornwallis, served in the American Revolutionary War. Some elements of his background may help to explain his later policies in Calcutta. He was sympathetic to the plight of the Irish, supported Catholic emancipation, and opposed the "Union on the ground that it was not acceptable to the people." See *ibid.*, p. 32.

[6] A possible explanation for Hastings's befriending of the Serampore Baptists was that as a youth he had acquired, thanks to his mother, a considerable tolerance for non-Anglican, revivalist religious sects. The Methodist reformers, in particular, were supported by members on his mother's side of the family. See *ibid.*, p. 13.

ism in which the decadence of contemporary Hindu culture had to be reconciled with the new discoveries of a glorious past civilization. The Indian government encouraged the students at Fort William to speculate freely on the problem of renaissance among the Hindus. Such intellectual awareness contributed to cultural responsiveness and produced better civil servants.

Although, in theory, Governor-general Wellesley committed himself to a direct policy of cultural change aimed at restoring the golden age of the Hindus, in practice official policy was directed at salvaging the literary remnants of the indigenous culture by generously supporting any attempt at intellectually reconstructing its content. On March 3, 1806, after Wellesley's departure, Governor-general George Barlow told the students and faculty that "the greatest advantages may be expected to stimulate the interests of Eastern Literature from this cooperation of the Asiatic Society with the College of Fort William in facilitating the acquisition of Oriental knowledge and science."[7]

After 1807, when Fort William was reduced in size as a collegiate establishment and its operations were reduced to the training of civil servants expected to serve in Bengal, the institution gradually became more responsive to the needs and aspirations of the Hindu elite in Calcutta. William Carey's role in promoting Bengali language and literature with the assistance of the regional Brahman pundits at the college became increasingly important.

In February, 1808, Lord Minto's disputation speech was already explicit about the possibilities of a more direct and purposeful policy of cultural revitalization within the institutional framework of the college:

> A printing press has been established by learned Hindoos. [Baboo Ram] has been furnished with complete founts of improved Nagree types of different sizes for printing books in the Sanscrit language. This press has been encouraged by the College to undertake an edition of the best Sanscrit Dictionaries and Grammars. . . . It may be hoped that the introduction of the art of printing among the Hindoos, which has been thus begun by the institution of a Sanscrit Press, will promote the general diffusion of knowledge among this numerous and very ancient people at the same time that it becomes the means of preserving the classic remains of their literature and sciences.[8]

[7] Roebuck, p. 144.

[8] *Public Disputations of the Students of the College of Fort William* (Calcutta: Hindoostanee Press, 1808), p. 23.

On March 6, 1811, Lord Minto signed his name to a minute on education which was written, most probably, by Henry Colebrooke[9] and contained the first officially supported Orientalist program for the "improvement" of Hindu culture.[10] The minute began with the commonplace observation that among the Hindus "science and literature are in a progressive state of decay."[11] "The number of the learned is not only diminished," wrote Colebrooke, "but the circle of learning, even among those who still devote themselves to it, appears to be considerably contracted."[12] Even more disastrous in Colebrooke's eyes was the decadence of the Hindu secular achievements, which he felt were "abandoned . . . and neglected," with "no branch of learning [being] cultivated but what is connected with the peculiar religious doctrines of the people."[13] Colebrooke recommended that the government resume giving financial aid to all indigenous institutions,[14] reform the Hindu College at Benares,[15] and establish "two new Hindu Colleges, one at Nuddea and the other in Tirhroot. . . ."[16]

The Minto Minute was the first of many educational plans submitted to the governor-general through the College of Fort William between 1811 and 1814. Each one was basically designed to rehabilitate Hinduism from within its own civilization structure. The evidence suggests that the impulse for cultural revival came from within India as well as from without, and that it was implemented at the College of Fort William. While the Charter Act of 1813 did much to assuage the moral indignation of Wilberforce and demonstrated the effectiveness of organized public opinion in English politics, its immediate impact on India was far less than has been imagined.[17]

By the time the text of the Act reached Calcutta, toward the end of 1814, three education plans were being considered seriously by

[9] Adam, p. 419.
[10] *Minute of Governor General in Council*, March 6, 1811, quoted *ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*
[12] *Ibid.*
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 421.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] No official committee to organize and supervise educational affairs was established until 1823. See discussion of the early "failure" in *Selections from Educational Records, 1781–1839*, comp. H. Sharp (Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing, 1920), p. 50.

the Fort William College Council on behalf of the governor-general.[18] These proposals and the consultation with various Calcutta pundits in 1812 on the social problems of *sati* indicated a deliberate, though cautious, alteration of governmental policy on cultural change. There is no evidence of a single educational plan that was entirely Evangelical or Anglicist in sympathy. However, the deeper theoretical justification that lay behind each educational proposal soon revealed an irreparable split among the Orientalists. The "classical" group favored an elitist, Sanskritic high-culture program whereas the "vernacularists" preferred a scheme that would reach the masses chiefly through the indigenous languages.

On September 20, 1813, Lord Minto, in his last speech before the College of Fort William, vigorously defended the rehabilitation program of the classical Orientalists.[19] He believed that the Hindu elite must be reintroduced to that "impenetrable mystery" of its ancient lore.[20] The Sanskritic tradition theretofore "locked up" must be "thrown open" and the "treasures of science, philosophy and literature . . . made available in its pristine form."[21]

At this time William Carey was the only European faculty member of the college who openly advocated a "vernacularist" position on cultural revitalization. His "plan for instructing Native Inhabitants of India in European Sciences" (June, 1814) is an interesting document not only because of its disclosure of a fragmentary educational philosophy but also because it was the first program for mass education in modern India. Carey drew up a comprehensive scheme, including primary and higher education, along with the practical financial means for realizing it. Interestingly enough, in the intended curriculum for training the future teachers of India, Carey emphasized "science" far more than he did any other subject—including religion.[22]

Carey actually proposed two plans. The first was designed to

[18] The original proposals in manuscript form are now with the records of the General Committee on Public Instruction, 1823–1841, at the West Bengal Record Office, Calcutta.

[19] *Public Disputations of the Students of the College of Fort William* (Calcutta: Hindoostanee Press, 1814), p. 21.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[21] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

[22] West Bengal Record Office, Calcutta, "Dr. Carey's Plan for Instructing Native Inhabitants of India in European Sciences," June, 1814, found in the Minutes, Proceedings and Correspondence of the General Committee on

educate all the inhabitants of British India, through their own languages.[23] The government had a "benevolent" responsibility in this matter even though the expense for such a system would be prohibitive.[24] He urged a system of mass education on a national level, modeled on the Serampore scheme soon to be spelled out in a book by his colleague, Joshua Marshman.[25]

If the government should feel that mass education was premature or too expensive,[26] he offered a second plan closer to the elitist sympathies of the majority of Orientalists. Carey suggested that the College of Fort William be expanded with government funds[27] to accommodate and instruct natives who might then return to their indigenous institutions and carry the "new scientific knowledge" to the people.[28] This scientific knowledge would include mathematics and biology, mechanical philosophy (physics), and the other natural sciences.[29] Indeed, modern science was to be stressed above all other fields. Carey visualized 100 students on the "native campus" of Fort William being instructed by three European professors assisted by a native faculty of six.[30]

In the same year, 1813, a third plan was submitted to the government by J. H. Harington, then a judge of the Sudder Dewani Adaulat. Harington offered a compromise between the classical and the vernacular Orientalists. To please the classical Orientalists, such as Colebrooke, Harington urged rehabilitating the better Indian institutions of higher learning—especially those in Benares, Bihar, and Bengal.[31] In response to Lord Minto's appeal of 1813, Harington proposed that new libraries be attached to these institutions in order that the fruits of the latest "cultural" discoveries of hitherto "locked-

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Public Instruction, 1823–1841. Cited hereafter as Carey's Plan and GCPI MPC, both of which are unpaginated.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Ibid.*

[25] *Infra*, p. 158.

[26] Carey estimated that the mass educational scheme he envisaged would cost 97,000 rupees. See Carey's Plan, June, 1814.

[27] Carey claimed that the new buildings would cost the government 50,000 rupees. *Ibid.*

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Ibid.*

[30] *Ibid.*

[31] J. H. Harington, "Observations for the Promotion of Science and Literature amongst the Inhabitants in India," n.d. GCPI MPC.

up treasures" be accessible to Indian scholars.[32] In order that intellectuals generally might benefit from the re-discovered knowledge, these libraries were to be public.[33]

Like Carey, Harington saw the need to introduce European knowledge to the natives of India, for he held that indigenous knowledge alone was not sufficient to rehabilitate a decadent "Oriental" culture.[34] Harington therefore advocated a dual educational system on all levels in which European knowledge would be taught in English as well as in the classical Indian languages and "dialects."[35] Harington thus anticipated by a decade the flexible Orientalism of H. H. Wilson and the General Committee of Public Instruction,[36] to be discussed later, and helped popularize what may be called the engrafting theory of "Westernization." Instead of imposing an alien language, the Orientalists advocated gradual assimilation of alien knowledge by engrafting the English system upon the indigenous one.[37]

On June 3, 1814, the Court of Directors dispatched a set of instructions on education to Marquess Hastings containing "our sentiments as to the mode in which it will be advisable you should proceed, and the measures you should adopt. . . ."[38] Despite the Evangelical triumph of 1813, the Court of 1814 employed a classically Orientalist approach:

> We have kept in view those peculiar circumstances of our political relation with India which, having necessarily transferred all power and pre-eminence from native to European agency, have rendered it incumbent upon us, from motives of policy as well as from a principle of justice, to consult the feelings, and even to yield to the prejudices of the natives. . . .[39]

As the Court viewed it, there were "two distinct propositions" involved in the program of educational reform provided for in the 1813 Charter Act: "First, the encouragement of the learned natives

[32] *Ibid.*
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] *Ibid.*
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] This idea was actually utilized by H. H. Wilson at Government Sanskrit College. *Infra*, pp. 179–184.
[37] Harington, GCPI MPC.
[38] Extract from a letter in the Public Department from the Court of Directors to the Governor-General-in-Council of Bengal, June 3, 1814, quoted in B. D. Basu, p. 8.
[39] *Ibid.*

of India, and the revival and improvement of literature; secondly, the promotion of a knowledge of the sciences amongst the inhabitants of that country."[40] The Court opposed any move to promote these ends through the establishment of "public colleges" because "natives by caste and of reputation will not submit to the subordination and discipline of a college. . . ."[41] Therefore, they recommended instruction in private homes, encouraged "in some instances by grants of pecuniary assistance."[42] Whatever plan might be adopted, it should "be conducted with due attention to the usages and habits of the natives."[43]

The Court looked to Benares as the most likely center for any all-India revival scheme, since the Hindus "regarded it as the central point of their religious worship, and as the great repository of their learning."[44] They recommended that Hastings visit the holy city and investigate "establishments still existing for the diffusion of knowledge in that city . . . and in what way these present establishments might be improved to most advantage."[45]

The cultural position taken by the Court of Directors was not dissimilar to that of the high-culture Orientalists. The Court not only supported the existing Hindu elite but aimed at restoring the "best" elements of the Sanskritic tradition. Considering the influence of Charles Grant, the dispatch was strangely devoid of Evangelical sentiments:

> We are informed that there are in the Sanskrit language many excellent systems of Ethics, with codes of laws and compendiums of the duties relating to every class of people, the study of which might be useful to those natives who may be destined for the Judicial Department of Government. There are also many tracts of merit, we are told, on the virtue of plants and drugs, and on the application of them in medicine, the knowledge of which might prove desirable to the European practitioner, and there are treatises on Astronomy and Algebra, which, though they may not add new light to European science, might be made to form links of communication between the natives and the gentlemen in our service, which are attached to the Observatory and to the depart-

[40] *Ibid.*
[41] *Ibid.*, p. 9.
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] *Ibid.*
[44] *Ibid.*
[45] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

> ment of engineers, and by such intercourse the natives might gradually be led to adopt the modern improvements in those and other sciences.[46]

Marquess Hastings apparently studied all these plans in some detail, but he seems to have been a man of pronounced individuality who proceeded according to his own inclinations. He strongly favored the cultivation of the vernacular languages. In June, 1814, he told the graduating class of the College of Fort William, "I even think that we have erred with regard to our Greek and Latin. Our sense of the inestimable benefit we have reaped from the treasures of taste and science, which they have handed down to us have led us to an extravagance of reverence for them. . . ."[47]

Hastings visited Benares as the Court had requested, but his reaction to the experience was not quite what they had expected. Hastings was so dismayed by the decadence he found there that "any bounty to the existing colleges appears to me a project altogether delusive."[48] He found that "the students only got by heart certain formularies unexplained to them by professors incapable of expounding the spirit of the lessons."[49] He concluded:

> The revival of the liberal sciences among the natives can only be affected by the previous education (beginning with the rudiments) which shall gradually give to individuals the power of observing the relations of different branches of learning with each other, of comprehending the right use of science in the business of life, and of directing their enlargement of thought to the promotion of those moral observances in which rests the temporal conscience of society as well as the sublimer duty of man. Then, but not till then, such records or traces of ancient lore as remain in the universities may be useful. Consequently to this opinion, I must think that the sum set apart by the Hon'ble Court for the advancement of science among the natives would be much more expediently applied in the improvement of schools, than in gifts to seminaries of higher degree.[50]

To understand the early stages of Bengal's cultural renaissance, it is extremely important to take into account both Hastings's dismay at the situation in Benares and his strong vernacularist leanings

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[47] Public Disputations (1814), p. 5.
[48] Adam, p. 422.
[49] *Ibid.*, p. 423.
[50] *Ibid.*

on behalf of popular culture improvement. Utilizing the institutional mechanism of the College of Fort William, while evidencing much interest in the Serampore Mission's philosophy of cultural change, Hastings made Calcutta—not Benares—the center of the new education. On October 11, 1815, he declared that he was ready to act "on a remedy to the evils which afflict the country,"[51] and added:

> The moral duties require encouragement. The arts which adorn and embellish life will follow in ordinary course. It is for the credit of the British name that this beneficial alteration should arise under British sway. To be the source of blessings to the immense population of India is an ambition worthy of our country. In proportion as we have found intellect sterile here, the obligation is stronger on us to cultivate it. The field is noble; may we till it worthily.[52]

Hastings seems to have inspired those around him with his vision of revitalization. He actually campaigned among groups of official and nonofficial Europeans in an effort to enlist the support of like-minded individuals dedicated to change.[53] Hastings became the first governor-general to visit Serampore Mission and to identify his own convictions on vernacular mass education with those of the Baptists.[54] He won the active backing of Wellesley's bright young men and their successors who administered the affairs of state when he was in the field. These men assisted in the organization and administration of the new societies and institutions that emerged from 1816 onwards as agencies for the Hastings program of reform. The young men who, more than a decade earlier, had written essays at the College of Fort William expounding glib theories of Hindu renaissance now had the opportunity to realize their youthful dreams. Indeed, some of these men were among the finest and most culturally sympathetic civil servants that ever represented Britain in India. Behind the formation of Hindu College (1816), the Calcutta School Book Society (1817), and the Calcutta School Society (1818) were the Fort William elite of W. B. Bayley, Hold Mac-

[51] *Minute of the Governor-General-in-Council on the Administration of Justice in Bengal*, October 11, 1815, quoted in J. C. Marshman, II, 117.

[52] *Ibid.*, p. 118.

[53] These men included those in the judiciary as well as Hyde East and J. H. Harington.

[54] J. C. Marshman, II, 112.

kenzie, W. H. Macnaughten, George Swinton, Thomas Fortesque, and H. T. Prinsep.

Although it was the service elite under Hastings who proved instrumental in carrying out the new programs aimed at modernizing the Indian traditions, the earliest impetus for popular cultural revitalization came from the missionaries at Serampore. For years they had actively seconded the Asiatic Society in reconstructing a Sanskritic Golden Age, but they shared little of the enthusiasm of their colleagues for the basic values of the Hindu high culture. The anticlassical bias of Hastings afforded them the opportunity of popularizing their own vision of a new India reshaped to conform with their image of Europe since the Reformation.

Notwithstanding the fact that these missionaries were the religious counterparts to the Orientalists in their zeal to accommodate Protestant Christianity to Indian culture rather than the reverse, the great social distance between themselves and the upper-class civil servants made high-culture classicism intellectually unattractive to them. The Serampore missionaries were self-made men of humble origin who acquired their Greek and Latin not at Oxford, as did William Jones, but in random moments of leisure from menial jobs in field and factory.

The Charter Renewal Act of 1813, with its educational provision and the new spirit of popular social reform under Marquess Hastings, gave the Serampore missionaries their opportunity to utilize printing and educational facilities for transmitting their idea of a renascent India. In 1816 Joshua Marshman published his *Hints Relative to Native Schools*, which contained both a Serampore manifesto for public education in India and a theory of European renaissance that he held out as a radiant model for Indian regeneration.

Marshman's view of renaissance in the *Hints* was but a preliminary sketch of an idea that would be developed and reiterated again and again in Serampore newspapers, periodicals, and tracts for at least a generation. On the surface, Marshman's opening attack on the notion of a Hindu golden age may seem very similar in spirit to the Evangelical position of Charles Grant and William Wilberforce. Marshman, no less than the Evangelicals, condemned the religious aspect of Hindu civilization as the true source of darkness and ignorance in India. But on a deeper level of analysis, Marshman's Christian bias was considerably less significant than his anti-

classical bias against the religious heritage of the Brahmans. It was the false religion propagated by this elitist class of Brahmans that stood between the common people of India and their intellectual, spiritual, and moral regeneration.[55]

The basic sociological differences between Evangelicals like Grant, whose environment was the aristocratic elegance of Clapham, and Marshman, who lived in the Baptist-styled communal settlement at Serampore, were reflected in their different approaches to cultural change in India. In fact, Marshman no less than Carey repudiated the basic Evangelical-Anglicist objective of completely supplanting indigenous learning with British scholarship imparted through the English language. "For ideas to be acquired in a foreign language," Marshman wrote, "opportunity, leisure, inclination, and ability must combine in the case of each individual."[56] An Anglicist program, therefore, would effectively reach only the elite, and the peasants would remain untouched by the efforts of the reformer.[57]

Marshman viewed contemporary Bengal as entering a new age reminiscent of Europe at the time of her renaissance.[58] The renaissance Marshman had in mind, however, was clearly not that of the classical humanist tradition in Italy. The key to European revitalization was not the revival of Latin or Greek but the integration of useful knowledge into the vernacular so that common people learned to express "the new learning in their colloquial social intercourse."[59] Peasants, whether in Europe or India, had to be made conscious of the practical value of the new knowledge, especially in the natural sciences. Such consciousness would prompt them to put that knowledge to use in an effort to improve their surroundings.[60]

In April, 1818, Serampore published the *Dig darśan*, with the English title of *Magazine for Indian Youth*. Besides its importance as the earliest periodical in Bengali, it was the first journal disseminating bits and pieces of Western knowledge to students at Hindu College and the *pathśālās* of the Calcutta School Society. The *Dig*

[55] Description of *Hints Relative to Native Schools*, quoted in J. C. Marshman, II, 122.

[56] *Ibid.*

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] See an excellent analysis of this in M. A. Laird, "William Carey and the Education of India," *Indian Journal of Theology* (July–September, 1961), 79.

[59] Quoted in J. C. Marshman, II, 122.

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 123.

darśan was distributed without charge, and it is likely that from its pages Calcutta youth first learned of Western history, literature, and science.[61]

In a series of articles published by *Dig darśan* from May to October, 1818, the Serampore missionaries fully developed and popularized their historical interpretation of the European renaissance. The strongly optimistic tone of these articles may be explained by the general atmosphere of excitement in Calcutta during Marquess Hastings's officially sponsored programs of social action. When the articles appeared, Hindu College was one year old and the missionaries themselves were just establishing their own college at Serampore. The Calcutta School Society and School Book Society were being launched by the younger civil-service elite, who utilized the resources of the College of Fort William. Also, at the very time that *Dig darśan* appeared, Serampore printed the first issue of the *Samāchār darpan* (Mirror of the News) in Bengali, the earliest modern commercial newspaper in a popular Indian language.

In an article of August, 1818, the *Dig darśan* introduced a series on the history of Europe into the schools of India. Characteristically, the missionaries approached the subject in the form of questions. How did Europe, which "holds most of the world under its influence,"[62] attain "its present superiority both in power and knowledge?" In ancient times, the missionaries wrote: "Europe was in a state of barbarism and the center of universal power was in Asia. The seat of empire has now transferred to Europe where the arts and sciences have attained their highest perfection and from where by a singular revolution in human affairs, they are now flowing back in those countries, in which they have been almost extinguished."[63]

To the missionaries, modern Europe began with the Renaissance. In that period, "desire gradually arose for genuine learning and knowledge, and the dark clouds of ignorance which had for so long a time over shadowed the whole of Europe began to disperse. . . ."[64] The greatest achievement of the Renaissance was not its classical revival but the development of the popular languages of Europe, "which underwent a gradual improvement and obtained

[61] The *Dig darśan* was sold publicly at slightly less than one rupee per copy. See "Dig Durshan," *Friend of India*, I (May, 1818), 26.

[62] "Progress of Events in Europe," *Dig darśan*, V (August, 1818), 170.

[63] *Ibid.*, p. 172.

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 204.

a firm foundation . . . through which the nations of Europe have since been impelled forever in a course of steady improvement."[65]

In the wake of the early Renaissance period came one of the most significant events of all time: the development of the printing press. Printing immediately reduced the price of books and "placed the means of acquiring knowledge within the reach of the great bulk of the people."[66] Consequently, "the qualities of the mind were aroused and such an impulse given to them that there is now no fear that mankind will ever relapse into barbarism."[67]

The missionaries predicted that printing would have a similar impact on India. "Wherever printing had been fully introduced," they wrote, "learning and knowledge have immediately spread."[68] It would demolish the power of Brahmanism as it had that of popery during the Reformation. Printing was indeed God's gift, the perfect medium to transmit the light of truth to the masses of India: "Before its invention, the progress made in knowledge during a thousand years, was scarcely equal to that made in a hundred years since. Europe has now sent this invaluable art, by which the knowledge now spreading in the East will continually remain and gradually acquire new splendor till every city in Hindoostan shall be filled with light."[69]

In the *Hints Relative to Native Schools*, Marshman linked the new idea of renaissance with what may have been the earliest detailed proposal for public education in India. This document is remarkable also in that it contained the seeds for a national program of compulsory education.[70]

On the most elementary level of education, Marshman recommended teaching peasant boys orthography, grammar, a useful vocabulary of 4,000 words, and some simple arithmetical rules. On the next level, he would acquaint the pupil with astronomy, geography, natural philosophy, minerology, and chemistry. "Such knowledge," Marshman believed, "would be invaluable to the Hindoos; and [would] rectify and enlarge their ideas of the various

[65] *Ibid.*
[66] "On the Origins of Printing," *ibid.*, p. 206.
[67] *Ibid.*
[68] *Ibid.*, p. 208.
[69] "On the Origins of Printing," Part II, *ibid.*, VII (October, 1818), 280.
[70] Laird, *Indian Journal of Theology*, X, 98.

aspects of nature around them."[71] History, ethics and morality were subjects to be taught on the highest level. In an age when it was fashionable in some circles to depict Bengalis as dishonest, corrupt, and cowardly,[72] Marshman's emphasis on moral training was significant. He wrote that morality was "intended to impart to them that knowledge relative to themselves, their responsibility for their actions, their state both here and hereafter, and the grand principles of piety, justice and humanity, which might leaven their minds from their earliest youth."[73]

Marshman's hints on the practical means for establishing a system of instruction were also extremely opposite. He proposed the Lancastrian system then in vogue among the English,[74] because it was cheap, somewhat similar to the indigenous mode,[75] and well-adapted to teach large numbers without the need of bilingual instructors (who were virtually nonexistent in India in 1816). The plan was basically monitorial in that each boy was expected to learn his daily lesson by dictation and repetition of facts and "truths which would not fail to remain deeply impressed on the memory."[76] Marshman estimated that it would cost 825 rupees a month to operate fifty such schools.[77]

It is ironic that Marshman's program, designed as it was to aid the rural masses of Bengal, succeeded best among the children of the Hindu elite in the metropolis of Calcutta. In the countryside, unfortunately, the missionary programs launched from centers such as Serampore and Chinsura[78] failed as mass educational experiments

[71] Quoted in J. C. Marshman, II, 123.

[72] For a good selection of contemporary European views on the Bengali character see R. C. Majumdar, *Glimpses of Bengal in the Nineteenth Century* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1960), pp. 8–9.

[73] Quoted in J. C. Marshman, II, 123.

[74] Lancaster was a Quaker who helped spread this type of education early in the nineteenth century. By 1818, 600,000 children (out of 2,000,000) were attending such schools in England.

[75] Some writers have argued that Lancaster's colleague, Andrew Bell, originally got the idea for the system of mutual tuition from India, where it had been practiced from "time immemorial." B. D. Basu, p. 13.

[76] Quoted in J. C. Marshman, II, 125.

[77] *Ibid.*, p. 126.

[78] Robert May, one of the first missionary educators to come to India after the enactment of the Charter Act of 1813, had established an ambitious educational system in Chinsura by the end of 1814. In 1818, when he died, thirty-six schools under his superintendance were operating on the Lancastrian system. Adam, pp. 59–61.

and remained merely as isolated pockets with no appreciable impact. As Kenneth Ingham has pointed out, the main causes for the failure were beyond the control of the missionaries. Poverty forced parents to remove their children from school in order to work during planting and harvest time. Pupils were obliged to attend innumerable religious festivals. Monsoons hindered attendance, and periodic epidemics not only decimated the local population but compelled it to move elsewhere.[79]

Whereas in rural Bengal the missionaries provided the impetus for educational reform, in Calcutta the government assumed the initiative for new experiments in popular education. The Calcutta School Society, founded in September of 1818 by the same people who established its sister organization, the School Book Society, proved to be one of the more interesting educational experiments of the Orientalists. The purpose of this institution was to improve existing schools "with the view to the more general diffusion of useful knowledge amongst the inhabitants of India."[80] The Society's task was to appoint a committee of Bengalis and Europeans to investigate the condition of Calcutta schools and to submit its findings to the first general meeting.[81] According to these findings, which were made public in 1819, there were in Calcutta "190 Bengalee *Pathshallas* [elementary schools] averaging 22 pupils or aggregating 4,180 children under instruction."[82] The state of education in these schools was found to be deplorable. The report characterized the curriculum as being

> entirely confined to the writing of the alphabet and figures and a very imperfect knowledge of arithmetic. Reading is not practiced, for although in a very few schools two or three of the most advanced boys wrote small portions of the most popular practical compositions, the manuscript copy is so inaccurate that they only became confirmed in a most vitiated manner of spelling, while as regards knowledge of the sciences or their relative or moral duties, they are entirely without foundation.[83]

[79] K. Ingham, *Reformers in India*, 1793–1833 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 78.

[80] *First Report of the Calcutta School Society 1818–1819* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1820), p. iii.

[81] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

[82] *Ibid.*, pp. 9–10.

[83] *Ibid.*

From the Society's report it was evident that a concerted effort was being made to reform Calcutta schools. A respectable Bengali named Radhakant Deb had personally introduced changes in "57 schools and 3,000 boys are now under the influence of the Society."[84] A retired Scottish businessman, David Hare, had built a school for the Society and was supporting it entirely from his own financial resources.[85] The Society was soon able to boast that its schools were stepping stones to Hindu College and that fifty of their students had been accepted there for higher education.[86]

Throughout the 1820's, the Society, with the support of the Calcutta intelligentsia and elite, continually expanded its operations and almost completely altered the existing system of lower education in Calcutta. Though overshadowed by the dazzling achievements of Hindu College, the Society schools probably did the real formative work of training many of the students who later won distinction as Derozio's disciples.[87] Under Orientalist administration, and guided by manuals such as Marshman's valuable *Hints*, Calcutta schools had by 1835 undergone the following changes:

> Printed instead of manuscript school-books are now in common use. The branches formerly taught are now taught more thoroughly, and instruction is extended to subjects formerly neglected, viz., the orthography of the Bengalee language, geography, and moral truths and obligations. The mode of instruction has been improved. . . . The system of teaching with the assistance of monitors, and or arranging the boys in classes, formed with reference to similarity of ability or proficiency, has been adopted. . . . A system of superintendence has been organized . . . examinations, both public and private, yearly and half-yearly, or quarterly . . . have been held in the presence of European and Native gentlemen, when gratuities were given to deserving teachers, and prizebooks to the best scholars. . . .[88]

In the Society's fourth report (1825), Radhakant Deb had expressed pleasure concerning the progress made since 1818, when

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 16.
[85] P. C. Mitra, *Biographical Sketch of David Hare*, p. 52.
[86] *Ibid.*
[87] Two of the leading Derozians who definitely received their primary education in these schools were Rasik Krishna Mullick (born 1810) and Krishna Mohun Bannerji (born 1813). Quite possibly Shib Chandra Das (born 1811) and Radhanath Sikdar (born 1813) attended Hare's school before going on to Hindu College.
[88] Adam, pp. 9–10.

the Calcutta schoolmasters at first refused "to come under the control of the Society."[89] Now the Society managed 166 schools.[90] As in the case of the School Book Society, the School Society seems to have lost local support and vitality as an organization during the Bentinck administration (1828–1835). By the time that the fifth report (1829) was made public, the number of schools under Society jurisdiction had rapidly dwindled to eighty-one, and "since that date," wrote William Adam in 1835, "there has been no account given to the public of the Society's operations."[91] In 1833, the supervised examination system, so crucial to the Society reform program, was discontinued.[92]

One far-reaching result of selecting Calcutta as urban setting for the Hastings-inspired popular renaissance was that it contributed directly to Bengali regionalism. Though Hastings visualized an "Indian" renaissance, in actual fact the new programs were largely confined to the Bengali metropolis and those who benefited most were the local Hindu intelligentsia and elite.

For over a decade (1801–12), William Carey, representing Sanskrit and Bengali at the college, had found himself constantly threatened by the favored Persian group on the one hand and the Hindustani group on the other.[93] This struggle may be viewed as the beginnings of Hindu-Muslim rivalry in microcosm but without Hindu and Muslim participants. In a deeper sense, William Carey's ambivalent defense of Hinduism and of Bengali culture or the Gilchrist-Hunter defense of Islam and the "Hindustani" culture provided a prototypal dialetic for the later Hindu-Muslim struggle.

After Hunter's death in Java in 1812, the Muslim side of this rivalry within the college was carried on by Thomas Roebuck, the fourth consecutive Scotsman to join Fort William's Urdu department.[94] Roebuck, son of an iron-works manufacturer in Scot-

[89] Quoted in "Fourth Report of Calcutta School Society," *Asiatic Journal*, XXII (July, 1826), 73.

[90] *Ibid.*

[91] Adam, p. 9.

[92] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[93] *Supra*, pp. 81–86.

[94] As secretary of the institution, Roebuck researched the College archives and compiled his best-known work, the *Annals of the College of Fort William*, published by the Hindoostanee Press in March 1819.

land, came to India at the age of twenty in 1801.[95] As a bright young military cadet in the Madras establishment, he demonstrated an unusual ability to learn Indian languages and was called upon to serve with Governor-general Wellesley in the latter's 1803 campaign against Sindhis.[96] Two years later, bad health forced Roebuck to return to England, where he met the famed John Gilchrist. Gilchrist had himself recently returned from India[97] and was tutoring candidates in Urdu for the Indian civil and military service.[98] Roebuck soon became Gilchrist's disciple and assisted him in completing a 700 page *English-Hindustani Dictionary* in which every Urdu word was transliterated into its equivalent in the Roman alphabet.[99]

Roebuck returned to India in 1810, but instead of going back to Madras he was brought by Governor-general Minto to Calcutta in order to utilize his abilities at the College of Fort William. In 1811, Roebuck published a revised edition of Gilchrist's 1803 collection of Persian tales in Urdu entitled *Bagh-o-Bohar*. According to H. H. Wilson, Roebuck's edition of this work for Fort William students was "the best guide to the idiom of the high Hindustani language that has yet been published."[100]

In 1814, after the regular Urdu professor, J. W. Taylor, complained that he could not handle both the Urdu and Hindi programs, Roebuck was called upon to take over the Urdu classes.[101] Soon afterwards Roebuck won pecuniary support for an Urdu adaptation of Abul Fazl's classic *Khirud Ufraz*, which was intended to give the student an introduction to the civilization of Moghul India. In sixteen chapters, extending to 805 pages, Roebuck recreated Fazl's ideas on "philosophy, Machiavellian tactics, accomplishments of great physicians, punishment, foreign policy, ethics," and so forth, all "expressed in beautiful tales."[102] Roebuck was proud that the government had chosen to sponsor a vernacu-

[95] "Memoirs of Captain Thomas Roebuck," *Collection of Proverbs and Proverbial Phrases in the Persian and Hindoostanee Languages*, comp. H. H. Wilson (Calcutta: Hindoostanee Press, 1824), p. vi.
[96] *Ibid.*, p. viii.
[97] *Supra*, p. 84.
[98] "Memoirs of Roebuck," *Collection of Proverbs*, p. ix.
[99] *Ibid.*, p. xiii.
[100] *Ibid.*, p. xviii.
[101] PCFW, DLXII (October 30, 1813), 557.
[102] *Ibid.*, DLXIII (August 10, 1814), 190.

larized version of "this classic achievement" of Indian Islam. To commemorate the occasion, "a new type had been cut under the direction of Dr. Charles Wilkins in England . . . and 500 copies would be printed on the best Patna paper."[103] Roebuck added, "This type . . . is more superior than anything yet used in the country . . . having all the words of a sentence apart from each other, while the letters of each word are brought as near as possible. . . . We are also inserting marks of interrogation. Students will now read the language with greater facility."[104]

Between 1815 and 1818, Roebuck became Carey's chief competitor not only in the struggle between Islamic and Hindu studies but in the greater conflict over the college priority of the Indian vernaculars. Unfortunately for Roebuck, none of the Urdu linguistic innovations seemed to go beyond the walls of the college building. Carey, on the other hand, was from 1817 onward beset by Bengalis outside the operational sphere of Fort William with requests for college support for their literary undertakings. The Muslim community of Calcutta, presumably undergoing no appreciable sociocultural change, somehow failed to produce a Rammohun Roy or Ram Camul Sen, two among many English-acculturated Hindu intellectuals of Calcutta who appealed to Carey for college patronage.[105]

From the Carey correspondence in the College of Fort William records, it is evident that he had fought a long, desperate battle to give Sanskrit and Bengali equal status with Persian and Urdu.[106] When the first volume of his long-awaited *Bengali Dictionary* appeared in 1818, Carey reviewed the years of struggle on behalf of Bengali:

> Till of late, the Bengalee language was almost wholly neglected by Europeans, under the idea of its being a mere jargon, only used by the lower orders of people. Most of the Vernacular languages of India still lie under the same neglect, from a supposition that the Hindoosthanee (Ordoo) is the language universally prevailing. . . .
>
> The mistaken idea that the Mossulman dialect of the Hindoo-

[103] *Ibid.*

[104] *Ibid.*

[105] Ram Camul Sen asked support for a Bengali–English dictionary on February 22, 1817. PCFW, DLXIV (February 22, 1817), 343–345. Rammohun Roy's request was for the publication of the *Vedanta Darshan* on September 29, 1818. *Ibid.*, DLXV (September 29, 1818), 155–156.

[106] *Ibid.*, DLXI (April 11, 1811), 505–506.

> sthanee was the most prevalent language in India was probably the cause that formerly induced the greater number of those Europeans who came thither, to study it in preference to all others. . . .
>
> The imperfect knowledge of the Ordoo dialect being deemed sufficient for all ordinary purposes, the great body of Europeans were thereby led to despise the vernacular languages of the country, and in consequence remain ignorant of them.
>
> Since the institution of the College of Fort William, this prejudice has been gradually giving way. The Bengalee language has become an object of study, a good number of the Civil Servants of the Honourable Company, and many other persons resident in India, have made it the object of their attention and not a few may be ranked among the number of good Bengalee Scholars. . . .[107]

Until 1815 Carey had been entrusted with all the Hindu vernaculars. In that year, a Hindi class was seriously taught for the first time.[108] The class was primarily for military students who found greater need for Hindi as the British war machine moved westward. In the wake of Hastings's phenomenal successes on the battlefield between 1816 and 1819, during which time the Pindaris were crushed, the Marathas defeated, and the Rajput states brought within the pale of British "protection," Hindi underwent a sudden metamorphosis from an inconsequential dialect to a paramount vernacular at the College of Fort William. In September, 1818, Thomas Roebuck—by then, secretary of the college and chairman of the Urdu Department—requested official support for a full-scale program in Hindi.[109] The report embodying his request has great significance in the light of present-day attempts by the Government of India to promote Hindi as the national language. While representing Hindi, rather than Bengali, to be the true Indian lingua franca, but at the same time continuing to support Urdu as the common language of the Indian Muslims, Roebuck informed the governor-general's office:

> With reference to the above circumstances and that the Bengali language is not spoken or understood above Rajmuhul; and that from thence upwards to the extremity of the Honourable Company's Possessions, that either the Hindoostanee, or those dialects of it, termed Bruj Bhoshu and Porubee Bhoshu [Hindi] are universally spoken and where the majority of the Honourable Com-

[107] Quoted in Dās, pp. 158–160.
[108] See Roebuck's report in PCFW, DLXV (September, 1818), 209.
[109] *Ibid.*, pp. 203–211.

> pany's Civil and Military Servants are employed: I respectfully beg leave to suggest that measures be taken in future both at the College of Hertford and Fort William, to secure not only a more general cultivation of the Hindoostanee, but also of those dialects, which the last above is spoken over a much greater extent of Country than the whole of the Province of Bengal itself. . . .[110]

In spite of the recognized need for more extensive Hindi training and systematization, Roebuck's program remained unimplemented for decades at the college. In the first place, its proponents were primarily interested in Urdu, and secondly, Hindi had neither an urbanized intelligentsia to stress the need to develop it nor a public in a modern sense able or willing to support it as a medium of sophisticated expression. Bengali, on the other hand, nourished itself on the fruits of metropolitan Calcutta and became the vital language of an urban and articulate elite.

[110] *Ibid.*, p. 209.

XI

The New Frontiers of Orientalist Scholarship under H. H. Wilson

In 1812, the College Council, in dire need of a useful Sanskrit dictionary, finally agreed to support H. H. Wilson, an unknown enthusiast of Sanskrit language and literature who then worked in the Calcutta Mint and managed the Hindoostanee Press.[1] On April 22, 1812, Wilson had requested 100 rupees per month "to defray expenses" in this worthy project to promote Sanskrit.[2] The Council, however, apparently needed evidence of his competence, for it had delayed granting his request.

On June 7, 1813, Wilson appealed to the Council for "assistance in translating the *Megha Dutt*, a Sanscrit poem which will throw light on the customs and notions of the Hindus."[3] In the preface to a later edition (1843), Wilson admitted that he published the work in order to gain recognition as a Sanskritist.[4] Looking back, he saw the 1813 Hindoostanee Press edition[5] as a "juvenile work" in which "the translator has . . . sometimes not only departed from his original

[1] Wilson was born in about 1786, studied at St. Thomas Hospital in London and, like so many other excellent linguists, came to India as a surgeon for the Company in 1808. "Horace Hyman Wilson," *Concise Dictionary of National Biography*, p. 119.

[2] PCFW, DLXII (April 22, 1812), 162.

[3] *Ibid.* (June 7, 1813), p. 450.

[4] H. H. Wilson, "Preface to the Second Edition of Megha Dutt," (1843), *Essays Analytical*, II, 310.

[5] H. H. Wilson, *Megha Dutt* (Calcutta: Hindoostanee Press, 1813).

further than was necessary, but further than was justifiable. . . ."[6] However, his version of Kalidasa's poems so impressed Carey and Colebrooke that Wilson's career as an eminent Orientalist was assured.

In 1816, the Court of Directors wrote an urgent letter to the College Council expressing the need for a good Sanskrit dictionary to be used both at Haileybury and Fort William.[7] "Must we still rely on the Cosha by Colebrooke," the Court asked, "which he said in his preface was only intended to supply the want until a larger compilation were undertaken?"[8] Wilson, who had by now established himself as Colebrooke's successor at the Asiatic Society,[9] and was employed by the College of Fort William,[10] immediately took charge of the project. On June 22, 1816, he was advanced 3,750 rupees.[11]

On October 28, 1819, the *Government Gazette* reported in boldface type that "on this day was published a Sanscrit and English Dictionary by Horace Hyman Wilson in one Large Volume."[12] The work was considered an improvement in the process of rationalizing Sanskrit lexicography. Wilson looked upon his efforts as "the first labours of the pioneer",[13] which "must be necessarily rough and incomplete."[14] However, "the path had been laid open, and it remained for succeeding generations to smooth, to level, and to embellish it."[15]

In this manner, H. H. Wilson, known to some for his corrective footnotes to James Mill's *History of India* (1840) and to others as the first professor of Sanskrit at Oxford, slowly established himself as the successor of H. T. Colebrooke as leading Orientalist in India. With Wilson, the older Orientalist preoccupation with

[6] Wilson, "Preface to Second Edition," *Essays Analytical*, II, 310.

[7] PCFW, DLXIII (January 4, 1816), 474.

[8] *Ibid.*

[9] Wilson had been secretary of the Asiatic Society since 1811, but Colebrooke overshadowed him as a Sanskritist until 1815.

[10] One of Wilson's chief duties at the college was to examine students in Sanskrit and Hindu law. His appointment there occurred on May 21, 1816. PCFW, DLXIV (May 21, 1816), 125.

[11] *Ibid.* (October 16, 1816), pp. 160–161.

[12] "Advertisement," *Government Gazette*, V (October 28, 1819), not paginated.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] *Ibid.*

Vedic India came to an end and a new era of scholarly interest in "medieval" India began.[16] If Colebrooke was identified primarily with the *Vedas*, Wilson did his best work in translating, describing, and analyzing the *Puranas*.[17] Wilson's broad interests in the whole range of post-Vedantic Indian history not only encouraged regional middle-period studies but paved the way for the discoveries of Maurya and Gupta India.[18]

In 1813, a professor of Oriental language and literature at Haileybury published the *History of Bengal*, which was not only the earliest "regional" work of its kind but also a very important textbook in the schools of Calcutta for at least half a century.[19] The historian, Charles Stewart, had begun his scholarly career at the College of Fort William as second assistant professor in the Persian department in 1803.[20] Two years later, the college had sent him to

[16] The question may be raised about the relationship between the new "medieval" interest in India and the comparable "medieval" interest during the same period in European nations. Many European historians view this new interest as having been an attribute of Romanticism and a useful tool in the service of nationalism. In the opinion of the author, the new interest in India as expressed in the scholarship of H. H. Wilson and his generation of Orientalists was still very much in the cosmopolitan tradition of the Enlightenment. However, these medieval models seem to have proved far more effective for Indian nationalists than the Vedantic ones.

[17] Wilson was assisted in his early translations by several Bengali intellectuals—notably Tarachand Chakrabarti and Ram Comul Sen. For Wilson's pioneering work, see H. H. Wilson, "Analysis of the Puranas," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, I (1832), 81–86; 217–237;—"Analysis of the Vishnu-purāna," *JASB*, I (1832), 431–442;—"Analysis of the Vāyu-purāna," *JASB*, I (1832), 535–543.

[18] The rediscovery of Mauryan India was dramatically announced to the world in 1837 by Wilson's successor in Calcutta, James Prinsep. The ability to read the *Brahmi* script culminated several years of intensive work by Orientalists in Ceylon and Nepal on the history of Buddhism in South Asia. For excellent background material on the scholarly events leading up to the discovery, see R. L. Mitra, *Centenary Review*, pp. 7, 8, 33, 53, 54, 59, 104–118. The work on the Gupta era (3rd–6th centuries A.D.)—for many, the true classical age of India—started also in the 1830's from research in coins and inscriptions.

[19] Stewart's *History of Bengal* and J. C. Marshman's *Outline of the History of Bengal* (1839) were standard textbooks at Calcutta colleges until late in the nineteenth century. See B. P. Mukerji, "History," *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*, ed. Atulchandra Gupta (Jadavpur: National Council of Education, Bengal, 1958), pp. 363–365.

[20] *Supra*, p. 85.

Mysore to catalogue Tipu Sultan's famous library and paid him handsomely for his work.[21] His *Descriptive Catalogue of the Library of Tippo Sultan* appeared in 1809, and many of the newly discovered manuscripts were subsequently published for the first time.

Significantly, Stewart's *History of Bengal* began with the Muslim period because "although the Hindoos of Bengal have an equal claim to antiquity and early civilization with the other nations of India, yet we have not any authentic information respecting them during the early ages of their progress; nor is there any other positive evidence of the ancient existence of Bengal, as a separate kingdom, for any considerable period than its distinct language and peculiar written character."[22] Stewart was hopeful of discovering evidence of the pre-Muslim period, since considerable historical research was being carried on in Calcutta: "I am credibly informed that materials have been and are still collecting for furnishing an authentic account of the Hindoo governments. . . . I hope that we shall one day be favored with a history of Bengal from the pure mine of Sanskrit literature."[23]

Significantly, at this juncture, Wilson sought to establish himself as an Orientalist. One way to leave his imprint was by illuminating those "perplexing labyrinths, dark passages and cumbrous obstructions"[24] that constituted the history of India between the Vedas and the rise of the Muslims. Before the serious utilization of archeology in the Prinsep era of the 1830's, texts were studied carefully by scholars convinced that philological competence was the key to the Hindu past. For this reason the College of Fort William, with its superb library of manuscripts and its emphasis on philology, played an important role in the early historical discoveries.[25] For the same reason also some of the finest examples of Wilson's historical analysis are found in the introductions and prefaces to his philological and literary work.

In the preface to his 1813 edition of the *Megha Dutt*, H. H. Wilson reviewed the progress made from the time of William Jones to

[21] Stewart received 3,000 rupees as a grant for the project and 50 rupees each month for living and other expenses. PCFW, DLIX (August 7, 1805), 430.

[22] C. Stewart, *History of Bengal* (London: Black, Parry and Company, 1813), p. v.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. xl.

[24] Wilson, "Notice of European Lexicons," *Essays Analytical*, p. 304.

[25] *Infra*, p. 188.

that date in discovering the history of the "Hindu nation." The major contribution of Jones was his identification through Greek sources of Patibothra as Pataliputra and Sandracottus as Chandragupta.[26] Since this discovery in 1793, scholars had not, Wilson felt, investigated Hindu history for its own sake but seemed more concerned with classical grammar, mythology, philosophy, and astronomy.[27] Wilson was convinced that the Hindus did have a history that would ultimately come to light through literature and inscriptions.[28]

In 1818, Hastings, as President of the Asiatic Society, supported Wilson, its Secretary, in new measures to enhance the effectiveness of the institution as an agency for historical scholarship. Meetings were now to be held twice a month on Wednesday[29] instead of scheduling one meeting every three months.[30] The ever-growing coin collection was now assembled and provided for in a museum.[31] The primary function of the Society as historical and archeological repository and headquarters for all of India really began with the Hastings-Wilson reforms of 1818. H. H. Wilson's close Bengali friend, Ram Camul Sen, was hired to co-ordinate these activities.[32]

One of Wilson's most formidable tasks was to demythologize the legendary heroes of the Hindus. Wilson, as a leading Indologist working in Calcutta, constantly reviewed the most recently acquired historical data and the various interpretations of those data. In the preface to his *Sanscrit Dictionary* of 1819, for example, he praised those who had "rescued" Sankara from mythology and had transformed him into an historical figure.[33] Wilson had already performed this difficult feat with Kalidasa in 1813[34] and, after doing the same for Sankara, he hoped to demythologize and give historical substance to the sacred figure of Buddha.[35]

[26] William Jones announced these first discoveries of "Hindu history" in his tenth annual discourse (1793), entitled "Asiatic History, Civil and Natural," in *Asiatick Researches*, IV (1795), 6.

[27] Wilson, *Megha Dutt* (1813), p. iv.

[28] *Ibid.*, p. vi.

[29] LASB–MP, III (April 1, 1818), 35.

[30] Mitra, *Centenary Review*, Part I, pp. 18–19.

[31] LASB–MP, III (August 10, 1818), 40.

[32] In 1821, Sen's monthly salary for this extra duty increased from 12 to 70 rupees. *Ibid.* (April 13, 1821), p. 105.

[33] H. H. Wilson, *A Dictionary: Sanscrit and English* (Calcutta: Hindoostanee Press, 1819), p. xvi.

[34] Wilson, *Megha Dutt*, p. vi.

[35] Wilson, *A Dictionary*, p. xv.

Demythologizing for Wilson's generation of Orientalists was always dependent upon the discovery of a plausible chronological scheme. The legendary Sankara about whom Brahmans had concocted "absurd views of his life"[36] was to Wilson entirely devoid of any reasonable historical dimension. Wilson's first step in establishing Sankara's historicity came as a result of reading a manuscript of the Vaishnava Brahmans of Madura (in the Colin Mackenzie Collection)[37] which reported that Sankara lived in the ninth century of the Christian era.[38] Colebrooke's subsequent research indicated A.D. 1000.[39] A noted Bengali intellectual, also an acquaintance of Wilson's, concurred with Colebrooke. "This is the age," wrote Wilson, "which my friend Rammohan Roy, a diligent student of Sancara's works, and philosophical teacher of his doctrines, is disposed to concur in. . . ."[40] Wilson's own opinion was that, "from a calculation of the spiritual generations of the followers of Sancar Swami from his time up to this date, he seems to have lived between the seventh and eighth centuries of the Christian era. This distance of time agrees with the statements made by Dr. Buchanan in his journey through Sancar's native country, Malabar."[41]

On July 4, 1821, Wilson read a paper before the members of the Asiatic Society on "the only Hindoo composition yet discovered to which the title of History can be applied with any propriety."[42] He referred to his recent translation of a manuscript on the history of Kashmir. This manuscript, the *Raja Taringini*, "turned out to be a series of compositions by different authors in different periods . . . which start with the legendary history of the province and terminate with the reign of Sangrana Deva in 1027 . . . ."[43] Wilson published his edition of the *Raja Taringini* in 1825.[44]

In the 1820's, under Wilson's leadership and using the research facilities of the Asiatic Society and the College of Fort William, the younger generation of British Orientalists began a serious study of

[36] *Ibid.*, p. xvi.
[37] *Infra*, p. 188.
[38] Wilson, *A Dictionary*, p. xvi.
[39] *Ibid.*
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] *Ibid.*
[42] H. H. Wilson, "Hindoo History of Cashmeer," *Calcutta Journal*, IV (July 20, 1821), 260.
[43] *Ibid.*
[44] H. H. Wilson, "Essay on the Hindu History of Cashmir," *Asiatic Researches*, XV (1825), 1–119.

non-Aryan, non-Vedantic cultures in South Asia. Wilson encouraged them to pursue two objectives–the cultivation of Buddhist studies and the reconstruction of Hindu (middle-period regional) histories.

In 1822, Wilson announced his determination to separate the legendary figure of Buddha from the historical one and to end the mystery surrounding Buddhism in ancient Indian history.[45] At about the same time, Benjamin Clough started his detailed analysis of the sacred language of Buddhism[46]–the results of which he would publish in 1824 as a *Compendius Pali Grammar*.[47] In that same year, Brian Hodgson, then British resident in Nepal, won financial support from the College of Fort William (through the recommendation of Wilson and William Carey), to begin gathering manuscripts on Buddhism in the Himalyan region.[48] Hodgson's finds, which he regularly dispatched to the libraries of the College of Fort William, the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and the newly-formed Asiatic societies in Europe,[49] became the single most important source for reconstructing the history of early Buddhism.[50] Hodgson's articles on Indian Buddhism, which began to appear in the late 1820's,[51] were themselves immensely important pioneering

[45] H. H. Wilson, "Extent of Boodhism in India," *Friend of India*, V (September, 1822), 245.

[46] On April 12, 1822, before members of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Clough could still speculate on "whether the Pali or Sanskrit be the more ancient language of India." "Asiatic Society," *Calcutta Journal*, V (April 19, 1822), 545.

[47] *Centenary Review*, Part II, 158.

[48] Carey's letter to the College Council requesting aid for his former student Hodgson is dated December 21, 1824. See PCFW, DLXVIII (January 15, 1825), 14. The prompt favorable response to the request is dated December 27, 1824. *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[49] In 1825 Hodgson sent 94 Buddhist manuscripts to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 66 to the College of Fort William, 79 to the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain, and 147 to the French Asiatic Society. See W. W. Hunter, *Life of Brian Hodgson* (London: John Murray, 1896), p. 266.

[50] From this collection, Burnouf, the French scholar, compiled his *History of Buddhism* (Paris, 1857). *Ibid.*, p. 267. Rajendralal Mitra used the Asiatic Society of Bengal collection for his famous *Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal* (Calcutta, 1882). *Ibid.*

[51] Some of the more significant articles by Hodgson are: "Notices of the Languages, Literature, and Religion of the Bauddhas of Nepal and Bhot," *Asiatick Researches* (1825), XVI, 409–478; "European Speculations on Buddhism," *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, III (1834), 382–388; "Remarks on M. Remusat's Review of Buddhism," JASB, III (1834), 499–

contributions.[52] Indeed, such research in the 1820's paved the way for the significant developments of the 1830's which led directly to James Prinsep's rediscovery of the Buddhist emperor Asoka.[53]

In 1823, while continuing to compile evidence for his book on Hindu dramas, Wilson brought out the first systematic history of Hindu medicine.[54] A year later, he published a little known but extremely interesting polemical essay on *Hindoo Law as it is Current in Bengal*,[55] which could well be interpreted as a defense of Bengali regionalism. In the essay, Wilson sought to refute Chief Justice Francis Macnaughten's charge that Bengali law was a confusing and pejorative form of the classical code.[56] Wilson, citing Colebrooke,[57] argued that the source of confusion lay not in the faulty Bengali interpretation of the great tradition but in Macnaughten's unreasonable expectation that contemporary legal practice would follow a model as remote and historically obscure as a classic Sanskritic Code.[58] In Wilson's opinion, one had to accept the fact that Hindu legal customs vary from region to region.[59] Moreover, contemporary Hindu learning and culture was in a state of decadence.[60] Therefore, instead of continuing to study one classical model, scholars should do intensive historical work on the diverse legal authorities, giving "probable dates of their existence," exploring the "conditions of Hindu Society to which their institutes applied," and depicting "the local character of their influence."[61]

In 1825, a bright young Orientalist named Andrew Stirling[62]

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503. For a complete list of Hodgson's articles in Calcutta journals see *Index to the Publications of the Asiatic Society*, 1788–1953, comp. S. Chaudhuri (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1956), pp. 140–147.

[52] It is not without significance that Hodgson wrote 122 articles on different aspects of Himalayan life and culture between 1825 and 1858. *Ibid.*

[53] *Infra*, p. 266.

[54] H. H. Wilson, "On the Medical and Surgical Sciences of the Hindus," *Oriental Magazine*, I (February, 1823), 207–212.

[55] H. H. Wilson, "On the Hindoo Law as it is Current in Bengal," *ibid.*, III (May, 1825), 171–240.

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 172.

[57] See Colebrooke's discussion of this point *supra*, pp. 88–89.

[58] Wilson, "Hindoo Law in Bengal," p. 180.

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 185.

[60] *Ibid.*, p. 176.

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 174.

[62] For his excellent scholastic background at the College of Fort William and for earliest elitist position, see Table 4, p. 99.

organized the results of his research on inscriptions of pre-Muslim Orissa and published the earliest systematic survey of the history of Orissa.[63] In 1825 also, because of his own research in the writing of his "Essay on the Hindu History of Kashmir," Wilson developed a serious interest in the history of the Rajputs. The particular question to which he addressed himself and for which he had failed to find satisfactory historical documentation was why the Rajputs fell before the Muslims in the twelfth century.[64] The knowledge of such questions and problems ultimately led James Tod to publish in 1829 his *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, one of the most sympathetic and influential Orientalist pieces on regional history ever written by an Englishman in India.[65]

By 1833, when Wilson set sail for England, he had himself brought to light or inspired others to bring to light so many original historical disclosures that he might well be considered the father of post-Upanishadic historiography in India. Under his tenure as leading Orientalist scholar in Calcutta, a beginning was made in reconstructing the era of the historical Buddha and the history of the Mauryan dynasty. Under Wilson the first authentic histories of Nepal, Orissa, Rajputana, and Kashmir, based on inscriptional and written records, were written.

Wilson's wide-ranging curiosity about the Hindu past and his encouragement of medieval studies endeared him to many members of the Bengali intelligentsia who saw in him a kindred spirit in their evocation of an all-embracing Hindu renaissance. It was Wilson who was the closest of any European to almost every charter member of the later Dharma Sabha and who defended their petition against the abolition of *sati*.[66] In return, it was the intelligentsia who

[63] See A. Stirling, "An Account, geographical, statistical, and historical of Orissa proper, or Cuttack," *Asiatick Researches*, XXV (1825), 163–338.

[64] *Centenary Review*, Part II, p. 6.

[65] Tod spent ten years collecting his data (1813–1823) before thinking of publishing the material. See Philips, "James Mill, Mountstuart Elphinstone, and the History of India," *Historians of India*, p. 223. The three volumes actually were published between 1829 and 1832.

[66] Wilson never defended *sati* but feared that all the educational progress achieved through the years with the assistance of the Bengali elite would be undone by the new wave of Westernization amid cultural polarity. In his own words, the legal prohibition of *sati* was dangerous because "the principle of a purer morality, as well as of a more virtuous and exalted rule of action, now actively inculcated by European education and knowledge, will receive a fatal check." Quoted in K. K. Datta, *Education and Social Amelioration of Women in Pre-Mutiny India* (Patna: Patna Law Press, 1936), p. 111.

helped save his Sanskrit College in 1835, when they amassed 10,000 signatures against Macaulay's Minute and Bentinck's resolution calling for its abolition.[67]

The critical point is that H. H. Wilson, in contrast to his common image as medieval apologist, did in fact offer Hindus a form of dynamic classicism far more palatable to them than the Vedic ideal transmitted by Jones and Colebrooke to Rammohun Roy. It was certainly evident to Wilson and to his contemporaries that something had gone wrong with Hindu civilization and that means had to be devised to revitalize it. Colebrooke's view of what was authentic in Indian civilization and his harsh judgment on all post-Vedantic developments in Hinduism were culturally unsatisfying to most articulate Indians. Wilson, on the other hand, argued that it was neither necessary nor desirable, and was perhaps even absurd, to eliminate traits that through the ages had become deeply ingrained in Hindu culture.[68] Secondly, it was to become increasingly difficult to convince Bengalis, whose known cultural origins and achievements were an integral part of "medieval" Indian history, that their true identity lay with the remote culture of the Indo-European invaders.[69] In fact, it was this kind of reasoning that led more and more Indians later in the century to conclude that instead of reforming the Hindu religion, Vedantic-inspired organizations like the *Brahmo Samaj* were actually "denationalizing" Indian culture.[70]

In view of these observations, it might be suggested that there was a direct correlation between the new regional middle-period subject matter of Wilson's historical writings and the rise of a his-

[67] *Infra*, pp. 247–248.

[68] We are once more confronted by the interesting possibility that Wilson's sympathies for medieval India were akin to the contemporary European's sympathies for his nation's medieval past.

[69] In many ways, the history of Bengal began with the disintegration of the Gupta classical age in North India (seventh century of the Christian era). Since Bengal was never within the sphere of Indo-Aryan culture, her cultural growth was heterodox (little tradition-oriented). Many Bengalis are exceedingly proud of their regional achievements, which date back to the middle period. They identify strongly with the *Sakti* tradition, the *Sahajiya* movement, and the Vaishnava religion and literature of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

[70] For an excellent book on the Indian renaissance reflecting this fear of Brahmoism as a subversive force in Hindu civilization, see D. S. Sharma, *Studies in the Renaissance of Hinduism* (Benares: Hindu University, 1944).

torical consciousness in Bengal.[71] For the same reasons that many Hindus felt uncomfortable with the Vedantic model as an ideal, they now felt more at ease with Wilson's less damning view of the immediate Hindu past. Wilson's work, then, perhaps served as a bridge linking the contemporary Hindu traditions with their historically authenticated pristine forms.

The historicity of the medieval past gave the reconstituted Hindu high culture a new dimension. Even more, the historical content of "Hindu" civilization revealed a series of golden epochs[72] that infused the newly born cultural consciousness with a regional pride.

[71] It is not intended to suggest that this was the only crucial factor in the rise of a historical consciousness. The reader is referred to the conclusion, where these classical models are discussed as cultural aspirations. See *infra*, pp. 284–289. In actuality, two things are postulated here: that the Vedantic ideal or model was by no means the only nineteenth-century view of the Indian past; and that the new feelings of regional identity and sympathy for the Hindu middle ages were in fact two sides of the same historical view. Moreover, it might be suggested that the Wilsonian legacy played a far more pivotal role in the historical outlook of later Indian nationalists than the legacy of the Vedanta.

[72] It seems significant that almost every region in South Asia not only has a "classical" age but dates that golden epoch during the middle period. Besides the above Bengal example, others would include Orissa during the time of temple-building in Bhuvaneshwar and Kanarak (sixth to twelfth centuries of the Christian era); the Rajputs anywhere from the eighth century to the period of Aurangzeb (seventeenth century); Gujarat during the same era; Tamilnad from the early centuries of the Christian era to the Chola period (eighth to thirteenth centuries); Vijayanagar as the great age of Telegu- and Kanarese-speaking peoples (fourteenth–sixteenth centuries); and Maharashtra from the era of Shivaji to that of the Peshwas (seventeenth–eighteenth centuries).

XII

The Transmission of Orientalist Ideals and the Intellectual Awakening of the Calcutta Intelligentsia

There seems little doubt that the era of Marquess Hastings was the golden age of British Orientalism in India. Between 1813 and 1823, as a result of unprecedented experiments in cultural fusion, Calcutta became the earliest of Asian cities to develop the qualities necessary for what Daniel Lerner has described as the transformation of a traditional society.

A sociointellectual revolution had taken place in what may then have been the largest non-Western city in the world.[1] The emphasis being on social action during the administration of Marquess Hastings, every effort was made to reach the local elite. Hastings's policy was designed to encourage Orientalists and Bengalis to work together for common goals. As we have seen, new organizations were created for that very purpose. Through such institutions as Hindu College, Hastings provided the means for what Daniel Lerner has called "media participation"[2] that aimed at "psychic mobility" or "liberating a man from his native self . . . to shape for himself a different personality than that with which he was born."[3]

[1] One estimate of the population of Calcutta in 1822, as compiled by city magistrates, was 179,917 (Adam, p. 5). This figure is evidently an underestimate. In 1801–1802, Wellesley ordered a population count for revenue purposes, and found that there were 600,000 people in Calcutta and 2,225,000 living within a 25-mile radius of the city. Adam, p. 5. Through 1830, most estimates of the metropolitan population ranged between 1,000,000 and 2,000,000.

[2] Lerner, p. 62.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.

As leading Orientalist during the Hastings administration, H. H. Wilson went far beyond scholarship and served, in effect, as a cultural and educational minister in Calcutta. It was Wilson who provided the philosophy for the new activist style of Orientalism under Marquess Hastings, and more than any other single man he embodied these ideas in experimental programs of higher education.

On October 6, 1823, Wilson, as secretary of the General Committee on Public Instruction, wrote a letter to Lord Amherst in which he outlined his new scheme for higher education in Calcutta. He suggested a possible union between the financially bankrupt Hindu College and the proposed Sanskrit College.[4]

In 1823, Hindu College, a private institution, was on the brink of financial collapse.[5] David Hare, representing the College Committee of Managers, appealed to Wilson for assistance. The appeal was successful and the famed Hindu College of Derozio and Young Bengal really owed its survival to Wilson, who gave the dying institution a new lease on life.[6] His motive, in all probability, was to use Hindu College experimentally in an effort to realize his own educational and cultural theories.[7] In fact, Wilson viewed Hindu College and Sanskrit College as two complementary departments, which he housed in the same building.[8]

[4] Wilson to the Governor-general, October 6, 1823, GCPI MPC.

[5] The most authentic information on Hindu College thus far published is contained in the centenary volume of Presidency College. Concerning its plight in 1823, we learn that its financial backer, "the firm Baretto and Sons went into liquidation, and the expenses were much heavier than the income, so that in 1823 the Hindu College had no more than Rs. 65,000 which yielded an income of about Rs. 400 a month. On the advice of David Hare, the Managers applied to the Government for financial assistance so that the institution might not only continue to live but also expand its activities." *Presidency College, Calcutta, Centenary Volume, 1955* (Alipore, West Bengal: West Bengal Government Press, 1956), p. 2.

[6] Hindu College's reprieve resulted from its being supervised by the General Committee of Public Instruction through the control of a Visitor. H. H. Wilson not only was that Visitor but was elected by the Managers as Vice-President and Member of the Sub-Committee of the College. *Ibid.*

[7] Wilson's aim was twofold: to "preserve from decay and degradation a system of science and literature held in pious veneration by the great body of its subjects, deeply interwoven with their domestic habits and religious faith . . . but . . . to combine with this the still more important one of opening new sources of intellectual and moral improvements by the gradual admission of . . . European science and learning. . . ." Quoted in Lushington, p. 133.

[8] The building for the new composite college seems to have been completed by May 1827. At that time, the Hindu College junior and senior de-

To appreciate fully Wilson's projected fusion of a Western- with an Indian-styled institution with the aim of promoting a modernizing synthesis, it is perhaps necessary to review the origins of Hindu College to determine precisely what constituted a "Europeanized" institution of higher learning during the Orientalist period. Our concept of the nature of Hindu College seems to have been formed largely by its history during the Derozio years, the post-Macaulay period, and as Presidency College.[9] Hindu College, having been founded in 1816 by the new Calcutta elite, was as much an expression of a collective sympathy for Orientalist values and ideals as it was of a practical need to provide the sons of that group with an advantageous European education. In this respect, Hindu College belonged in the tradition of the Eurasian academies that first exposed most of the early Tagores and Derozio, among others, to Western learning.[10] On the other hand, the College, having been established during the Hastings era of revitalization schemes, was far more ambitious financially and intellectually than any of the other purely utilitarian primary and secondary schools. It was, in fact, the first collegiate institution of its kind anywhere outside of the West.

According to the best available evidence, Hindu College was established, financed, and managed by the Calcutta *nouveaux riches*.[11] Such families as the Mullicks, Debs, Tagores, and Ghoshals owed much of their recently acquired wealth to European relationships. They valued highly competence in the English language and training in European fields of study. Prompted to act by leading Orien-

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partments occupied the two wings and Sanskrit College the center of the building. Consequently the archival records for Sanskrit College began in 1827.

[9] Hindu College was converted into Presidency College in 1855. For additional official information on the event see *Centenary Volume*, pp. 5–7.

[10] See remarks on these schools in D. P. Sinha, pp. 1–2.

[11] See *Centenary Volume*, pp. 301, 303. The administration of the college was entrusted to a Committee of Managers, consisting of "Heritable Governors, Governors for life and Annual Directors, or their Deputies" (p. 304). From the beginning, the executive control of Hindu College was in the hands of the new Calcutta elite. It was men such as P. K. Tagore, Radhakant Deb, and Ram Comul Sen who decided Derozio's fate in 1831. Moreover, the institution was managed by the elite, without European participation, from the time it was founded. The early Orientalist supporters withdrew from "active participation in the management, desiring only to be considered as private friends" (p. 1).

talists in Calcutta, they apparently saw no danger to their Hindu identity in encouraging such an institution. Indeed, from the beginning, when the charter was drafted, the elitist founders insisted that the college not teach Hindu theology and metaphysics but concern itself primarily with "the cultivation of European literature and European science."[12] According to the official account in the *Presidency College Centenary Volume*, "the most striking feature of the Hindu College was its determined effort to impart secular education."[13]

Unless it is related to the Orientalist attitudes toward cultural change that had for years predominated among the English overlords in Calcutta, this secular emphasis at Hindu College seems incomprehensible. It might appear on the surface that the founders of the college had repudiated their own religious heritage and favored a radical transplantation of secular Western culture on Indian soil. This interpretation is difficult to accept, because the twenty Bengalis who wrote the original thirty-four rules of the charter and then approved them formally on August 27, 1816, were all conservative upper-caste Hindus. In fact, five key members of the founding committee who warmly endorsed the charter principles were "traditional" pundits.[14] The explanation seems rather to lie in the fact that these Bengalis, including the pundits, who were all brokers to the English, viewed the contemporary West with the same sympathy that Orientalists had already demonstrated with regard to Indian culture. There is not the slightest reason to believe that the Hindus who founded the college also aimed to establish a beachhead for the diffusion of British values and the alienation of their youth.[15] It was the Orientalist understanding and respect for Hindu civilization that probably impelled the founders to favor the idea of a Hindu College in the first place. The Orientalist belief that Western education should serve not as an end in itself but as the stimulus for changing the indigenous culture from within explains why Bengalis accepted the experiment without a recorded murmur of dissent. It was therefore not really secular knowledge in Western dress that was to be imparted at Hindu College, but useful knowledge from the West transmitted without ethnocentric bias.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 2.
[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 302–305.
[15] *Infra*, pp. 204–205.

It is important to add also that the curriculum was not entirely Western. Though the founders clearly assumed a position of religious neutrality, they most certainly did not subscribe to the inflated view of later Anglicists who equated useful knowledge with that of the West and useless knowledge with Oriental learning.[16] Bengali writing was taught along with English, and the Hindu system of arithmetic was evidently considered as useful as the European.[17] In point of fact, according to the first rule of the very first section of the charter, "the primary object of the institution is, the tuition of the sons of respectable Hindoos, in the English and Indian languages and in the literature and science of Europe and Asia."[18] Nevertheless, as evidenced by the upper-division curriculum offerings, Western history, Western literature, and the natural sciences were stressed from the beginning. But it cannot be too strongly emphasized that it was not the aim, in stressing these subjects, to Anglicize Hindu youth. The document that perhaps most clearly summarizes the subtle motivation behind the formation of Hindu College is a letter of Sir Edward Hyde East in which he records his impressions of a meeting held on May 14, 1816, to decide the character of the new institution. East, Chief Justice of the Calcutta Supreme Court, and an early European sponsor of the college, "was struck with the enthusiasm of the prominent pundits, Sanskrit scholars, for the introduction of Western literature and science." He went on to add:

> When they were about to depart, the head pundit, in the name of himself and the others, said that they rejoiced in having lived to see the day when literature (many parts of which had formerly been cultivated in this country with considerable success, but which were now extinct) was about to be revived with greater lustre and prospect of success than ever.[19]

It was only after Wilson placed Hindu College under the aegis of the General Committee that it gradually developed into the outstanding institution so fondly remembered by historians of modern Bengali culture. The General Committee gave it a new building that contained science laboratories and a library. It recruited a capable staff to teach new subjects that went far beyond

[16] *Infra*, pp. 249–250.
[17] *Centenary Volume*, pp. 301–302.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 303.
[19] *Ibid.*, p. 301.

the old utilitarian curriculum, and it made great efforts to provide the necessary books.[20] When Derozio came to the college in 1828 as an instructor of English literature, he had at his disposal the resources and facilities of a first-rate institution of higher learning.

Wilson's Sanskrit College proved to be a fascinating experiment in cultural fusion. Together with the traditional Sanskritic studies of rhetoric, sacred literature, law, and grammar, Wilson initiated a science curriculum of mechanics, hydrostatics, optics, astronomy, chemistry, mathematics, anatomy, and medicine.[21] In 1828, Dr. Tyler, the anatomy professor, introduced anatomical dissection to his class, and before the end of the year, "the students not only handled the bones of the human skeleton without reluctance, but in some instances themselves performed the dissection of the softer parts of animals."[22] It should be added that almost half of the student body chose to study English and the sciences, even though these were not required subjects.[23]

Sanskrit College manuscript records indicate that, in general, the experiment proved satisfactory. Throughout the decade, students did remarkably well on examinations in all courses and, on the average, one of every three was a recipient of a yearly prize for high proficiency.[24] In 1833, the professors of untraditional subjects submitted course reports evaluating the response of Hindu students

[20] By 1828, Hindu College was able to accommodate 400 students. Funds had been provided for 100 free students who paid nothing for courses and books. English books worth 49,376 rupees had been donated to the college by the School Book Society and the General Committee for Public Instruction, and the latter body paid for 5,000 books recently imported from England. T. Fisher, "Memoir on Education of Indians," *Bengal Past and Present*, XIX (July–December, 1919), 105.

[21] Although the science courses at Sanskrit College seem to have been successful, the first apparatus-equipped science class at Hindu College in 1824 was a failure. *Presidency College Centenary Volume*, p. 3.

[22] J. Long, *Brief View of the Past and Present State of Vernacular Education in Bengal* (1868), reprinted as an Appendix in Adam, p. 516. Long's facts are corroborated in a letter from H. H. Wilson, Secretary of Sanskrit College. Sanskrit College Archives, Calcutta, Wilson to Price, February 10, 1832, not paginated. Sanskrit College, General Records and Correspondence, 1827–55. Cited hereafter as SC GRC.

[23] Of ninety-one students enrolled at Sanskrit College in 1827, forty were studying English. "College of Fort William Visitor's Speech," *Calcutta Gazette*, August 20, 1827, quoted in the *Days of John Company*, p. 227.

[24] In 1829, slightly better than an average year, prizes were awarded to 62 of 137 students. Fisher, *Bengal Past and Present*, XIX, 102.

to the new learning. These interesting documents reveal that, on the whole, Hindu students trained in the traditional manner had no difficulty in responding to Western course-work.

In medicine and related subjects, for example, student interests and competence in dissection led to the establishment in 1831 of a small hospital "attached to the College."[25] One graduate, N. K. Gupta, who had been trained as an apothecary, was apparently doing quite well in that position at the hospital.[26] Other students trained as assistant surgeons were regularly attending "94 House Patients and 158 out ones."[27] Though no Hindu had yet performed a major operation, they regularly performed minor ones such as "opening little abscesses and dressing sores and cuts."[28] In 1834, John Tytler, professor of medicine and an ardent Orientalist, wrote an impassioned letter to the General Committee on Public Instruction (GCPI) on behalf of the natural-science program at Sanskrit College. Fearing that the Anglicists might abolish the entire non-traditional part of the curriculum, Tytler boldly defended the Orientalist credo:

> European Science like the Christian Religion has by far the best chance of succeeding among the nations of Hindoostan by our avoiding even the appearance of coercion and allowing and even encouraging them to study their own system and ours together and quietly make the comparison themselves. We thus prove that we have no jealousy of their knowledge, we incline all their national feelings in our favour and give their understandings full room to act. . . .
>
> Coercion always produces the direct contrary effect to what is intended. The outward profession of a belief in any system of Science like that of a belief in religion is of no value unless attended with an inward conviction. Almost nothing is gained by getting a Student to repeat in College our systems of Science unless he can be convinced of their truth and brought to act in the world according to their principles. . . .[29]

On May 6, 1817, a special meeting was held at the College of Fort William to establish a school-book society that would supply "lessons and books in the Native Languages" to the indigenous

[25] J. Grant to Major Taylor, January 1, 1833. SC GRC.
[26] *Ibid.*
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] J. Tytler to Troyer, April 3, 1834, *ibid.*

schools of Calcutta.[30] It was attended by members of the European and Indian faculty of the college, along with some prominent members of the civil service.[31] A committee of managers was formed under the leadership of William B. Bayley and included such Europeans as Thomas Roebuck, William Carey, and Anthony Lockett. Among the Indians on the committee were Mrtyunjay Vidyalankar, Radhakant Deb, and Tarinicharan Mitra. Mitra, then chief munshi of the College Urdu Department, was appointed native secretary.[32]

The Orientalists and Bengalis who assembled to form this unprecedented association did so chiefly to make cheap books available to Calcutta schools.[33] Religious books (whether Hindu or Christian) were prohibited, although works on the "inculcation of moral duties" were permitted.[34] The main purpose in supplying the books was to introduce not superior Western knowledge but "useful knowledge." In theory, the Orientalists at first sought to democratize the traditional culture by laying open "the stores of [indigenous] learning and literature which have been hitherto shut off from the mass . . . and confined to a few, who like the monks in the early period of European history are more solicitous about their own personal advantage than the improvement of the public mind."[35]

The Society paid for the translation of British textbooks into Indian languages and sponsored new editions of indigenous works as well as some original compositions in the vernaculars. It was through these Society publications that Indian students first became acquainted with Western science, history, and literature. In 1818 the Reverend W. H. Pearce translated a geography text into Bengali.[36] A year later, J. C. Marshman wrote a treatise in Bengali for the Society on *Jyotish o goladhyāy* (*Astronomy and Geogra-*

[30] "Calcutta School Book Society," *Government Gazette*, Vol. III (June 5, 1817).

[31] N. L. Basak, "Origin and Role of the Calcutta School Book Society in Promoting the Cause of Education in India," *Bengal Past and Present*, LXXVIII (January–June, 1959), 41.

[32] Mitra was secretary of the Calcutta School Book Society until 1831. Dās, pp. 204–205.

[33] "Calcutta School Book Society," *Government Gazette*, Vol. III (May 22, 1817).

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] The Bengali title was *Bhugol brittānta.* The book was used in Bengali schools until the 1840's. De, p. 234.

phy).[37] In 1820, William Carey's son, Felix, a brilliant writer of Bengali,[38] published in that language an abridged version of Goldsmith's *History of England*.[39] At about the same time, Felix Carey brought out the first volume of a *Bengalee Encyclopedia*.[40] William Yates's *Padārth-bidyā-sār*, or *The Essence of Natural Science*, was published in 1824 and was popular for decades as a textbook.[41] These works and many others indicate that the Orientalists did not restrict their support to traditional works but also made recent Western learning available in the languages of the people. It is reasonable to assume that these translations of alien technical works greatly enriched the indigenous languages, especially Bengali.[42]

The Calcutta School Book Society apparently functioned well until 1829. Bengali support for the Society seems to have ceased at about the same time that Bentinck began his educational program in 1830. According to William Bayley's seventh report, of 1828,[43] the Bengalis were still making liberal contributions, sales of publications exceeded expenditures, and the Society had actually made a profit of 7,827 rupees.[44] In 1829, on the other hand, the Society was actually in debt. In the Society's eighth report (1830), Holt Mackenzie was at a loss to explain why "we find only six Native names

[37] A copy of this book is in the Carey library at Serampore, but part of the title page is missing. De maintains that the 1819 edition was a second one. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

[38] S. K. Das believed that Felix Carey was the best writer of Bengali among the missionaries. Dās, p. 252.

[39] The complete English title was *An Abridgement of the History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Death of George the Second by Dr. Goldsmith and Continued by an Eminent Writer to the Peace of Amiens in 1802.*

[40] Carey actually translated the section on anatomy from the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. De, p. 227.

[41] S. K. De believed that its popularity was largely due to its narrative style and to the lessons framed in the form of a pleasant dialogue between teacher and pupil. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

[42] In 1877, Rajendralal Mitra wrote an interesting pamphlet on this subject and reviewed the progress of integrating scientific terminology into Indian languages since the establishment of the Calcutta School Book Society. R. Mitra, *A Scheme for the Rendering of European Scientific Terms into the Vernaculars of India* (Calcutta: Thacker and Spinck and Company, 1877).

[43] W. B. Bayley, "Calcutta School Book Society," *Calcutta Gazette*, June 3, 1830, quoted in *The Days of John Company: Selections from the Calcutta Gazette, 1824–1832*, ed. A. C. Das Gupta (Calcutta: West Bengal Government Press, 1959), March 10, 1828, pp. 298–304.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 303.

[among the subscribers] although in 1817–18 there were about eighty."[45]

One of the more fruitful contributions of the College of Fort William to the Hastings policy of establishing channels for transmission occurred in 1818. In that year, the private holdings of the college library were made available to the general public. The idea of opening the library of the College of Fort William to the general public was already considered by Marquess Hastings in 1816, when he asked Mohun Prasad Thakur (the Bengali assistant librarian) to prepare a list of printed Oriental books in the college library.[46] The final decision to open the library came sometime in 1817 when the governor-general's office ordered that the European and Oriental collections be catalogued and that rules be drawn up "for the use of the Books with due attention to the most effectual means of preserving them."[47]

The creation of a public library in Calcutta was one of several important gestures of cultural policy originating with the governor-general or the men around him. In England, Charles Grant also seemed enthusiastic about the idea, although, unlike the officials in Calcutta, his chief interest lay in attracting the "natives" to Fort William's European collection. In response to a query by Grant, Lockett, the college librarian, in a letter of January 15, 1816, described Fort William's European collection, which made up about one-quarter of the library's holdings:

> The English Library in the College is small but valuable. It was originally founded by voluntary contributions, and a few purchases have been since made. It consists of History, Travels, Law, Divinity, and general literature. It has been lately enriched by a valuable present from the University of Oxford of some of the best modern editions of the Greek and Latin Classics. The whole collection however does not probably exceed 2,000 volumes and will constitute I believe the only public Library in India.[48]

On September 26, 1818, Lockett announced that the first complete catalogue of Fort William books and manuscripts had been completed and would be accessible not only to Europeans but

[45] H. Mackenzie, "Calcutta School Book Society," *ibid.*, pp. 524–527.
[46] PCFW, DLXIV (May 30, 1816), 101–106.
[47] *Ibid.* (May 26, 1817), p. 404.
[48] Letter of January 15, 1816, included *ibid.*, pp. 405–407.

to "literary men in general in India."[49] Lockett reported that "already the first part of the catalogue was printed and in a few days the second part will be published including a descriptive list of all the manuscripts in the Library. . . ."[50]

The catalogue listed 8,341 printed books, catalogued under "Biography, History, travels, Law, Divinity, antiquities, Grammar, Lexicography and classical, Biblical and Oriental Literature";[51] the library housed 2,994 manuscripts worth 200,000 rupees,[52] classified according to twenty-one categories from "copies of the Koran" to "Sanscrit Treatises on all branches of Hindoo Literature."[53] These manuscripts were extremely valuable since they constituted the primary sources for the articles and books of the Calcutta Orientalists. (The present collection of manuscripts at the library of the Asiatic Society of Bengal is basically the old Fort William collection, transferred to the Park Street building after 1830, when the college was dissolved.[54])

The Fort William collection of manuscripts was in fact the first major repository of authentic knowledge on the cultures of India in the modern world. It was composed largely of the Stewart Collection (gathered in an expedition to Mysore in 1804), the Francis Buchanan Collection (South India, 1805), the Claudius Buchanan Collection (South India, 1807), the Lockett Collection (Arabia, 1813), the Colin Mackenzie Collection (South India, 1814) and the Colebrooke Collection (miscellaneous sources, 1815). These collections and others elsewhere contained the elements necessary for reconstructing the dim past of pre-Muslim India.

Lockett was justifiably proud not only of Fort William's manuscript collections but of the entire library holdings. According to his catalogue, the grand total of printed and manuscript sources was 11,335.[55] He claimed that the collection of orientalia at Fort William was "far superior to any similar collection with which I am acquainted."[56] While the Paris orientalia figure was unknown, Spain's Escorial had 1,851 volumes of orientalia and Oxford University 1,561, whereas the "Library of the Seraglio at Constanti-

[49] PCFW, DLXV (November 24–25, 1818), 143.
[50] *Ibid.*
[51] *Ibid.*
[52] *Ibid.*, p. 144.
[53] *Ibid.*
[54] *Infra*, p. 233.
[55] PCFW, DLXV (November 24–25, 1818), 143.
[56] *Ibid.*, p. 145.

nople had only 7,294 volumes mostly on Theology and Jurisprudence."[57]

At the conclusion of the report, Lockett warned that if the library were to be properly preserved and protected against theft the staff would have to be increased and their salaries raised. He was particularly concerned about deterioration and recommended strongly that "the volumes should be taken from the shelves, cleaned and examined every day, otherwise they will in a short time be entirely destroyed by damp and worms."[58]

On October 23, 1818, Hastings approved Lockett's report *in toto* and modern India's first public library opened its doors.[59] Such scholars as Rammohun Roy, Ram Camul Sen, and Radhakant Deb must have found its resources immensely useful.

In the genesis of a developing cultural consciousness among the intelligentsia, there was perhaps no event more important in the transmission of new ideas than Serampore's experiments in journalism. In 1818, three separate journals and newspapers[60] emerged from that famous press, which for almost two decades had survived mainly as a publishing agent for the College of Fort William. In the 1820's, Bengalis followed Serampore's lead and started their own journalistic ventures, thereby greatly adding to the existing media for communication.[61]

Serampore's *Samāchār darpan* (*Mirror of the News*) was, unlike the *Dig darsán*, a commercial journalistic venture. It has the distinction of being the first vernacular newspaper in India, its earliest issue being dated May 23, 1818. The *Darpan* appeared in Bengali only until the Bentinck administration. In 1829, as a result of the Bentinck emphasis on English,[62] J. C. Marshman, its editor, made

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 144.
[58] *Ibid.*, p. 130.
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 151.
[60] The third of these was the *Friend of India*, which first appeared in May, 1818. It is not discussed in this section.
[61] The first journal edited by a Bengali was Rammohun Roy's bilingual *Brahmmunical Magazine*, dating from 1821. In that year, also, he began publishing the *Sambād kaumudī*. In 1822, the conservative *Samāchār chandrikā* came into existence. In 1829, the *Banga dut*, another Rammohun weekly, was published simultaneously in English, Bengali, Persian and Hindi. Two years later, Iswar Chandra Gupta started his *Sambād-prabhākar*. *All-India Exhibition of Newspapers*, pp. 46–47.
[62] In 1822 it became a biweekly publication. B. N. Bandhypādhyāy, *Sambādpatre sekáler kathā* (Kalikātā: Bangiya Sāhitya Parishat, 1949), p. vi.

it bilingual (English and Bengali). Published in Calcutta, the *Darpan* was essentially an English newspaper translated into the vernacular. Each issue carried news of the world and of local events, organizational reports, shipping intelligence, police reports, and advertisements. Though precise figures for this early period are not available, the *Darpan* was presumably well received by those of the Calcutta elite who preferred to read a newspaper in their own tongue. Bengalis immediately saw the value of the press as an excellent medium for conveying their ideas. Not only Rammohun Roy but that remarkable commercial entrepreneur Dwarkanath Tagore as well saw the potential importance of the *Samāchār darpan.* One of the first subscribers to the Serampore paper,[63] Dwarkanath was apparently so captivated by the idea of communicating via newsprint that in the 1820's he began buying and controlling as many of the Calcutta papers as he could.[64]

Just as other associations that emerged during the Orientalist period served as media to institutionalize cultural positions, so did some newspapers and periodicals. Rammohun's *Sambād kaumudī* (*Mirror of the News*) represented his views both in the presentation of news items and in editorials. In fact, Rammohun published his first journal, the bilingual *Brahmmunical Magazine* (1821), for the expressed purpose of defending his concept of monotheistic Hinduism against the contrary views of the Serampore missionaries.[65] The *Samāchār chandrikā* (*Moonlight of the News*) apparently first published on March 5, 1822, represented the cultural position of Mrtyunjay, Radhakant, and the majority of the intelligentsia.

This variance of cultural attitudes probably accounts for many of the early newspapers' consistent policy of slanting even the most trivial news items. Serampore's *Darpan* always glowingly described literary and educational achievements in Calcutta.[66] In contrast, indigenous items demonstrating pomp, idleness, superstition, and amorality were reported with disparaging detail. For example,

[63] J. C. Marshman, II, 163.

[64] Not only did Tagore support Rammohun's journalistic ventures in the early 1820's, but he bought the *Bengal Herald* (or *Banga dut*) in 1829, the *India Gazette* in the same year, and in 1830 the defunct *John Bull*, which later became the *Englishman* in 1833.

[65] *All-India Exhibition of Newspapers*, p. 46.

[66] See reprinted Darpan articles on Sikkha [learning] and Sāhitya [literature] in B. N. Bandyopādhyāy, *Sambādpatre*, pp. 3–54, 57–104.

among the *Darpan*'s most lurid prose offerings were articles on human sacrifices,[67] *sati*,[68] and the Juggernaut festival in Puri.[69]

The *Kaumudī* often seemed to echo the sentiments of the missionaries on all issues pertaining to "native improvement." The *Kaumudī* editorials were constantly rallying around new educational schemes[70] and calling for public support of existing ones. Caste prejudice, religious excesses, and *sati* were regularly attacked.[71] Unlike the *Darpan*, however, the *Kaumudī* strongly championed Indian needs and aspirations. On March 24, 1822, in an editorial possibly written by Rammohun, the *Kaumudī* called for the Indianization of the higher ranks of the civil service.[72] If the *Darpan*'s prose was most telling when it described the inhumanity of Indians to fellow Indians, the *Kaumudī*'s most impassioned passages dealt with examples of European brutality to Indians.[73]

The *Chandrikā*, edited by Bhabanicharan Bannerji, reflected a cultural outlook different from that of either of its competitors. In 1822, conceivably as a reaction to the repeated attacks on *sati* by the *Darpan* and the *Kaumudī*, this organ representing a powerful group of the intelligentsia began defending the practice of self-immolation.[74] The first article on the subject, which appeared in the *Chandrikā* under the heading "Widow Cremation," was essentially an argument against the cultural interference of foreigners (and of Rammohun) who did not understand the virtuous aspects of this self-sacrificial act.[75] By willing to die by fire next to her departed spouse, the Hindu wife displayed a faithfulness and heroism unrivalled by her counterparts in any other culture.[76] Ironically, the particular *sati* described in this article occurred in

[67] Under Samāj [society], *ibid.*, pp. 251–252.

[68] *Ibid.*, pp. 272–273.

[69] *Ibid.*, pp. 312–316.

[70] *Sambād kaumudī* article on "Liberal Education," reprinted in *Calcutta Journal*, I (February 9, 1822), 415. *Sambād kaumudī* article, "Want of Seminaries," in *Calcutta Journal*, I (February 26, 1822), 586–587.

[71] *Sambād kaumudī* article on "The Folly of Caste," *ibid.*, I (February 1, 1822), 330; "Juggernaut," *ibid.*, IV (July 24, 1822), 331; "Burning of Widows," *ibid.*, II (March 18, 1822), 178.

[72] "Natives in Civil Service," *ibid.*, I (March 24, 1822), 260.

[73] "Appeal to Magistrates to Protect Hindus from Being Whipped by Europeans on the Streets," *ibid.*, I (January 31, 1822), 321.

[74] *Samāchār chandrikā* article, "Widow Cremation," reprinted *ibid.*, I (March 18, 1822), 179.

[75] *Ibid.*

[76] *Ibid.*

Serampore, and the *Chandrikā* proudly related "how the wife ascended the funeral pile of her husband without the least sign of pain or symptom of reluctance, to the utter astonishment and discomfiture of her enemies."[77]

On other issues, however, the *Chandrikā* reflected the enlightened attitude of the Calcutta intelligentsia. Though it may seem surprising to those of us accustomed to regarding the "conservative" opponents of Rammohun as narrowly limited, the *Chandrikā* consistently supported every educational reform, while conveying to its readers the "need for a well-informed public of natives."[78] In the late summer of 1822, the *Chandrikā* even seemed to endorse Serampore's program for Indian renaissance and was as committed to education and enlightenment as were the *Kaumudī* and the *Darpan*.[79] Indeed, upon examination, the only basic difference between the *Chandrikā* and the *Kaumudī* was in their conflict of cultural values. Rammohun's group was opposed to idolatry and *sati* because these were considered by dedicated exponents of Vedantic religion to be medieval excrescences. The *Chandrikā* intellectuals were more flexible in their approach to contemporary folkways, even though these may have contradicted ancient dictates. Therefore, neither group could be classed as "conservative" or "liberal" but each looked to a different element in a newly created Hindu consciousness of their own past.

In most cases, the new avenues linking the regional elite of Calcutta both with the ideals of the Orientalists and with the broader horizons of European civilization came into being within the Hastings-sponsored associations committed to social action. After 1816, Hastings invited the Bengali intelligentsia to collaborate in these new groups. It was largely within these institutions and in their mutual interaction that cultural attitudes were transmitted to the Bengali intelligentsia, who willingly participated in most institutional activities. It should be stressed that under Orientalist guidance and sponsorship, cultural change was seldom considered a threat by any prominent member of the Hindu elite in Calcutta. The rapport between Orientalist and Bengali not only facilitated

[77] *Ibid.*

[78] *Samāchār chandrikā* article, "Well-Informed Public," reprinted *ibid.*, IV (August 17, 1822), 666.

[79] *Samāchār chandrikā* article, "Decay of Language and Orthography," *ibid.*, I (April 10, 1822), 438.

the transmission of new cultural attitudes from Orientalist to Indian but helped shape a new intellectual tradition in Bengal.

The existence of cultural rapport and the process of transmission of new attitudes through Orientalist educational institutions is perhaps best illustrated in the case of Radhakant Deb. Deb has been a kind of *bête noire* among many historians, chiefly because of his defense of *sati* (1829–31). Just as Rammohun Roy captured the imagination of subsequent generations of Bengalis as the "father of modern India,"[80] Deb has been pictured as Rammohun's conservative adversary who dedicated his life to the preservation of traditional India.[81] These expressions are convenient perhaps chiefly from the historical standpoint. Rammohun was far more traditional than he was generally acknowledged to be, whereas Deb was much more liberal than he was posthumously given credit by his critics for being.

Radhakant Deb was a member of the Calcutta Bengali-Hindu elite which owed both its wealth and social status to profitable relations with Europeans. Radhakant's father, Gopi Mohun Deb, was the adopted son of Naba Krishna Deb (who had won fame, wealth, and social status for his family in Calcutta during the chaotic middle decades of the eighteenth century).[82] In the sophisticated atmosphere of the metropolis, Radhakant learned Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Sanskrit, Bengali, and English.[83] Unlike many other members of the Calcutta Bengali community (who were perhaps not as wealthy as the Debs), Radhakant did not feel compelled to enter a profession but developed his interests independent of direct British contact. In 1803, while his Calcutta-born friend, Tarinicharan Mitra, employed his linguistic abilities as a faculty member at the College of Fort William, Radhakant on his own initiative started to work on a Sanskrit dictionary, which by 1809 had become so large and diversified in subject matter that he transformed it into an encyclopedia.[84]

[80] The expression is used as the title for the section on Rammohun in Hay, p. 571.

[81] In the historians' presentation, Radhakant usually follows Rammohun as "the conservative reaction." See particularly Bose, p. 34; and Amit Sen [S. C. Sarkar], *Notes on the Bengal Renaissance* (Calcutta: National Book Agency, 1957), p. 16.

[82] *Supra*, pp. 60–61.

[83] Bāgal, *Rādhākānt Deb*, p. 6.

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

The Debs lived as did other members of the Calcutta Hindu elite, performing their religious and social duties apparently without question. They were not listed among the new Society of Friends that clustered around Rammohun Roy in 1815–16[85] and, as was the custom then, the Debs performed an elaborate enough Durga Puja in their home to gain attention in the local English press.[86] In 1816, Radhakant's father contributed a large sum of money towards the establishment of Hindu College and served on its first managing committee along with members of the prominent Tagore and Mullick families.[87] Some years later, Radhakant took his father's place on the committee. In this way, Radhakant Deb began his long and interesting career as a member of the Hindu College Managing Committee.[88]

Radhakant's intellectual development with respect to Western learning seems to have begun when he joined the newly formed Calcutta School Book and School Societies in 1817–18. Through these Orientalist institutions, and feeling no threat to his cultural integrity, he absorbed new cultural values that seem to have profoundly influenced him for the rest of his life. For the first time, presumably, he established contacts with the Serampore missionaries, the high-culture Orientalists, and independent philanthropists such as David Hare. He took an active role in the institutional operations of the Calcutta School Society by becoming its native secretary and by personally supervising the reform of Calcutta schools.[89] He grew so involved with these activities that his house became the informal headquarters for the School Society,[90] and the annual examinations were held there.[91]

[85] The term *Brahmo* was not used until the organization became established in 1828. At first, in 1815, the group called itself *Atmiya Sabha*, or Society of Friends.

[86] *Calcutta Gazette* article on "Puja," October 20, 1814, quoted in Ghose, p. 28.

[87] The first committee was composed of Ram Gopal Mallick, Hari Mohan Tagore, and Gopi Mohan Deb. "Hindu College at Calcutta," *Asiatic Journal*, II (January–June, 1817), 133–134.

[88] For more details on Radhakant's association with Hindu College see Bāgal, *Rādhākānt Deb*, pp. 9–17.

[89] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[90] *Ibid.*

[91] "Calcutta School Book Society," *Asiatic Journal*, XIV (September, 1822), 296–297.

Radhakant's new cultural attitudes, intellectual development, and deepening social consciousness in the 1820's are best reflected in his publications for the Calcutta School Book Society. His cultural attitudes were clearly Orientalist-inspired in that he saw no conflict between indigenous and Western learning and sought to integrate both into the Calcutta school system. This point cannot be overemphasized, since Radhakant and his Bengali peers would never have participated in a program that they felt was aimed at the destruction of their own civilization.

Radhakant's *Bāngla sīksa-grantha* (1821), which he translated as *A Bengali Spelling Book*, was in reality a small encyclopedia for student use and included an elementary analysis of language structure, spelling rules, geographical terms, and basic arithmetic.[92] Though a simple textbook, it is notable for its harmonious combination of indigenous and nonindigenous knowledge without the slightest hint of contradiction or stress between the two. Also in 1821, Deb collaborated with J. D. Pearson in bringing out the first edition of the *Nitikatha* (*Moral Tales*), which drew on both Christian and Hindu traditions and were designed to inculcate a feeling of morality without any religious bias.[93]

In 1822, Deb collaborated with a pundit friend of his in a book advocating female education. The *Strī-sikhar bidya* (*Female Education*), though it urged that girls be instructed largely in domestic skills at home, was radical for its time not only in India but in Europe as well.[94] In historical perspective, Radhakant can hardly be blamed for not advocating institutional coeducation for women and their equal occupational rights with men. It might be noted

[92] The book's contents are briefly described in De, pp. 554–555.

[93] Bāgal, *Rādhākānt Deb*, p. 7. Deb was also interested in the natural sciences, with which he probably became acquainted thanks to William Carey, John Mack and others. The popular textbook on astronomy (*Jyotibidya*) attributed to William Yates was written at least in part by Deb. See Bāgal, *Rādhākānt Deb*, p. 7. Finally his *Prācīn itihāser sammacchay* (Epitome of Ancient History), published in 1830, suggests that he had become equally familiar with Western historical writing.

[94] Deb's 1824 edition contains an interesting dialogue by means of which he obviously attempted to dispel traditional prejudices against female education. For example, "Question: But old men say that a girl who reads and writes becomes a widow. Answer: Nonsense. It is not supported by scriptures and our Puranas refer to educated women. . . ." Quoted in R. C. Majumdar, *Glimpses*, p. 60.

that Radhakant actively supported missionary efforts in educating girls,[95] even though this may seem contradictory to those who know him only as the defender of the women's right to burn as widows.

Rammohun Roy was one of the most fascinating and complex Indians to have emerged during the Orientalist period of modern Indian history. His work as a Westernizer has been lauded by generations of admirers, who have glorified him as the "father of modern India."[96] Perhaps no other Bengali, with the exception of Rabindranath Tagore, has been so thoroughly identified with the cultural self-image of the people. The aura surrounding this man has exerted so profound an influence on later historians that he is frequently portrayed as a virtual god-man containing within himself the seeds of a regenerated India. The genesis of the Indian renaissance is often traced back to 1815, the year Rammohun settled permanently in Calcutta.[97]

According to the charismatic image that began to evolve after his death in 1833, Rammohun was a lone progenitor of modern India who owed little of his enlightenment to European contact and who shared little of his vision with Bengali contemporaries. In the light of new research in the twentieth century, however, the evidence suggests that Rammohun sought exposure to European Orientalism just as did Deb and other members of the intelligentsia.

It is reasonably certain that Rammohun was in Calcutta between 1797 and 1802.[98] Rammohun might well have come to the metropolis in search of a livelihood, as so many others did as a result

[95] Radhakant's active support of missionary efforts to develop a program of female education are reviewed in Bāgal, *Rādhākānt Deb*, pp. 28–33.

[96] The historian, N. S. Bose, in a recent addition to the historiography of the Bengal renaissance has continued this rather flattering homage to Rammohun: "In the midst of the darkness that prevailed all over the country the first man who saw the vision of a new India was Raja Rammohan Roy. He is aptly called the inaugurator of the Modern Age in India." N. S. Bose, *The Indian Awakening and Bengal* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1960), p. 10.

[97] Bose writes, "The Bengal Renaissance started in 1815 when Rammohan came down to settle in Calcutta and to begin his life's work." *Ibid.*, pp. 12–13.

[98] Scraps of evidence include a petition to Lord Minto by Rammohun written on April 12, 1809, in which Roy clearly stated his association with *munshis* of the College of Fort William; quoted in B. N. Bandyopādhyāẏ, *Rāmmohun Rāẏ* (S-s-c series; 1942), pp. 26–29. John Digby, a student at the College of Fort William in 1801, and Rammohun's later employer, wrote in 1817 that he was "acquainted" with Roy during his student days; see

of the Cornwallis native-exclusion act of 1791 and the Permanent Settlement of 1793. That conjecture is not unreasonable when it is considered that he came from a family with a vested interest in the old established order[99] and that his father, a zemindar of the traditional ruling class in Bengal, lost his property in 1800, went to jail, and died a ruined man in 1803.[100] On the basis of reliable evidence, Rammohun's "professional" activity in Calcutta between 1799 and 1802 was to loan money to civil servants presumably in or near the College of Fort William.[101]

There is some truth to the belief that Rammohun was an original thinker and that his early associations, which led ultimately to the formation of the *Brahmo Samaj* in 1828, were without precedent in Indian history. On the other hand, Rammohun owed far more to his British Orientalist contacts and to the ideas of other Bengalis than is generally acknowledged.

His civil-service employer, John Digby, was among the earliest College of Fort William students (1801–1803), and though none of Digby's essays are extant, his fellow students have left evidence of his preoccupation with Hindu renaissance.[102] Rammohun acquired his knowledge of the English language from Digby, who presumably provided him with his first window to the West.[103]

Digby's Preface to the London reprint of Rammohun Roy, *Abridgement of the Vedant* (London: T. and J. Hoitt, 1817). A third piece of evidence is the testimony of a witness for Rammohun during the Supreme Court litigation of 1817–1819, from which it appears rather certain that Roy was in Calcutta between 1798 and 1802, loaning money to civil servants and speculating in Company paper; see *Selections from Official Letters and Documents Relating to the Life of Raja Rammohun Roy*, pp. xxxiv–xl, 190–191.

[99] His grandfather served Alivardi Khan; see Bandyopādhyāy, *Rāmmohun Rāy*, p. 11.

[100] *Selections from Official Letters and Documents Relating to the Life of Raja Rammohun Roy*, p. xxvi.

[101] In May, 1819, Golobnaranjan Sarkar appeared before the Supreme Court on Rammohun's behalf and stated that Roy loaned one civil servant, Andrew Ramsey, 7,500 rupees in 1799. Business was apparently so good that Roy purchased two taluks of land in Burdwan in July, 1799; see *ibid.*, pp. xxxiv–viii.

[102] *Supra*, pp. 97–104.

[103] Digby himself said of Rammohun: "By persuing all my public correspondence with diligence and attention, as well as by corresponding and conversing with European gentlemen, he acquired as correct a knowledge of the English language as to be able to write and speak it with considerable accuracy. He was also in the constant habit of reading the English news-

Rammohun's idea of the theistic *Brahmo*, the cornerstone of his reformation movement, was already expounded in published tracts between 1800–1802 by Ramram Basu, and there is a strong possibility that the two men met and discussed theology at the College of Fort William during this period.[104] Rammohun also knew the leading Orientalists such as H. H. Wilson[105] and was familiar with their practical programs and scholarly accomplishments.

In fact, as already noted, H. T. Colebrooke's "Essay of the Vedas," which he published in 1805, contained the essence of Rammohun's later arguments centering around the discrepancies between ancient textual requirements and contemporary practices.[106] Moreover, Colebrooke, more than twenty years before Rammohun, demonstrated from textual sources that the voluntary immolation of widows in Bengal was a departure from the authentic tradition.[107]

Not only does the evidence seem to reduce Rammohun's contributions as an original thinker, but it appears also to controvert the view that he was the earliest "liberal" David, locked in mortal combat with the "conservative" Brahman Goliaths bent on preserving a diseased social system against the inroads of humanitarianism and common decency. As a matter of fact, it is extremely doubtful that there was a so-called "Whig" faction led by Rammohun and a "Tory" faction guided by Radhakant Deb. Most of the men during this period advocated identical programs of social reform inspired largely by Orientalists.[108]

Indeed, the liberal-conservative polarization theory is completely untenable in the light of Rammohun's actual relationship to programs for social change. Rammohun never participated (as the others did) in any of the Orientalist institutions promoting educational reform. Recent studies have proved that he was not involved in the establishing of Hindu College.[109] He was not an active member of the School and School Book Societies, and he remained aloof from all the projects of the General Committee on Public Instruction.

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papers. . . ." Quoted in K. C. Mitra, "Rammohan Roy," *Calcutta Review*, IV (July–December, 1845), 366.

[104] B. Bandyopādhyāy, *Rāmrām Basu*, pp. 41–45.

[105] *Supra*, p. 172.

[106] *Supra*, pp. 40–41.

[107] *Supra*, p. 40.

[108] *Supra*, pp. 190–192.

[109] For a well-documented article, see R. C. Majumdar, "Foundation of Hindu College," *Journal of the Asiatic Society*, XXI (1955), 38–51.

One aspect of Rammohun's work and influence not fully understood is his contribution to the developing idea of Indian renaissance. It is noteworthy that however unsystematic Rammohun may have seemed from his writings on utilitarianism, rationalism, and liberalism, he was remarkably consistent about his view of an authentic Indian tradition. Furthermore, Rammohun's writings on the golden age of authentic tradition were the outgrowth of cultural encounter between himself and Europeans or between himself and his fellow Indian critics. Indeed, as these writings reveal, and what has often been overlooked, is that if Rammohun contained within himself the seeds of a regenerated India, he carried also the seeds of alienation that stemmed from a struggle to understand his identity.

When Rammohun came to Calcutta in 1815 and published his translation of the *Vedanta*, he had already committed himself to a view of Indian culture that he would defend in private and public debates until his death in 1833. Without belittling his Westernizing activities, it should nevertheless be pointed out that from the publication of the *Vedanta* translation until the establishment of the *Brahmo Sabha* in 1828, Rammohun did not succumb to the allurement of alien cultural imports, but devoted much of his time and energy to reinterpreting his own socio-religious tradition. While resisting the Serampore missionaries and other Europeans on the one hand, on the other he fought a long-drawn-out battle for the cultural purification of Hinduism. As a result he alienated Europeans as well as members of his own elitist class, whom he condemned for rationalizing the existence of moral and social evils.

In the *Abridgement of the Vedant*, Rammohun argued that image worship as then practiced in India was an aberration from the authentic monotheistic tradition, wherein worship of "the true and eternal God" left no room for idolatry.[110] Whether or not Rammohun was influenced by his knowledge of Islam,[111] the fact is that already, in the manner of the Jones-Colebrooke Orientalists, he divided Indian history into a Vedantic period that provided the authentic model for "the whole body of the Hindoo theology,

[110] R. Roy, *Abridgement of the Vedant*, 1815, reprinted in T. deBary, *Sources of Indian Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958), p. 573.

[111] Rammohun Roy's first published work was a Persian treatise on monotheism and demonstrates the influence of Islam on his thought. This work was translated into English as *A Gift to Deists* by O. E. Obaide and published with a preface by Rajnarayan Basu in 1884.

law and literature"[112] and was "highly revered by all the Hindoos,"[113] and a later period of "Hindoo idolatry" with its "innumerable gods, goddesses and temples" which have since been destroying "the texture of society."[114] Rammohun blamed the Brahmans (as did Jones and Colebrooke) for this miserable state of affairs, since they had preferred to conceal the wisdom of the *Vedanta* "within the dark curtain of the Sangscrit language,"[115] rather than to transmit the truth to the people in their own languages. For this reason, he himself had translated the *Vedanta* into Bengali "to awaken [his countrymen] from their dream of error. . . ."[116]

In an English translation of one of the *Upanishads* in 1816, Rammohun emphasized this new division of Indian history. He sought to convince his English readers "that in the most ancient times the inhabitants of this part of the globe . . . [used] allegorical language . . . to represent the attributes of the Creator. . . ."[117] But only in the subsequent age, he wrote, "when literature and philosophy decayed," did those "absurdities and idolatrous notions" appear.[118] He concluded his introduction with a proposition (which the Serampore missionaries later challenged) that India no less than the West had developed a notion of the "unity of the Supreme Being as sole Ruler of the Universe."[119]

At first, Rammohun drew fire mostly from other members of the Indian elite who seemed as much concerned by the fact that Rammohun had translated the scriptures into popular languages as they were by any of the propositions he advanced. In 1817, a year before his tract on the abolition of *sati* was published, Rammohun wrote a *Second Defense of the Monotheistical System of the Veds* which is noteworthy for being the earliest detailed description by an Indian of the religious errors of the time. Rammohun maintained that the present age was benighted not only because the common people were ignorant of the *Vedas* but also because the Brahmans themselves were equally uninformed of their true content.[120] Ram-

[112] R. Roy, *Abridgement of the Vedant*, p. 573.
[113] *Ibid.*
[114] *Ibid.*, pp. 574–575.
[115] *Ibid.*, p. 574.
[116] *Ibid.*, p. 575.
[117] R. Roy, *Translation of the Cena Upanishad*, Vol. CLX of *India Office Library Tracts* (Calcutta: Hindoostani Press, 1816), p. iii.
[118] *Ibid.*, p. iv.
[119] *Ibid.*, p. v.
[120] R. Roy, *A Second Defense of the Monotheistical System of the Veds*, Vol. CCCCLXX of *India Office Library Tracts* (Calcutta: n.p., 1817), p. 43.

mohun maintained that there was, for example, nothing in the scriptures to authorize the burning of widows (and yet widows were being immolated)[121] and, though the *Vedas* prohibited "the acceptance of money . . . in the marriage contract of a daughter", this custom was "practiced by the Brahmins of Bengal who [sell] female children under the pretence of marriage."[122] Where was there a single reference in the *Vedas*, he argued, to Kulinism and its nefarious polygamous practice designed merely "to gratify brutal inclination"?[123] Rammohun's strong attack on Kulinism is most interesting as evidence not only of his zeal as a social reformer but also of his unfavorable view of medieval Indian history:

> According to Manu . . . respect and distinction are due to a Brahman merely in proportion to his knowledge; but on the contrary amongst modern Hindoos, honor is paid exclusively to certain families of Brahmans, such as the Koolins, however void of knowledge and principle they may be. This departure from law and justice was made by the authority of a native prince of Bengal . . . Balla Sen within the last three or four hundred years. And this innovation may perhaps be considered as the chief source of that decay of learning and virtue, which I am sorry to say, may be at present observed. For whenever respectability is confined to birth only, acquisition of knowledge and the practice of morality in that country must surely decline.[124]

By the early 1820's, Rammohun was engaged in an intellectual conflict on two fronts. Attacked by traditionalists and syncretists among his countrymen, for different reasons, he now found himself attacked by Europeans as well because of his cultural attitudes. The underlying reason why years of quiet debate on Hinduism and Christianity between Serampore missionaries and Rammohun erupted into a violent public altercation is not entirely clear. There is little doubt, however, that the conversion of a young Baptist missionary named William Adam to Rammohun's way of thinking and the fact that both later founded a Unitarian Committee in Calcutta contributed to the openly acknowledged rupture.[125]

[121] *Ibid.*
[122] *Ibid.*, p. 44.
[123] *Ibid.*, p. 46.
[124] *Ibid.*
[125] For more information on the Unitarians of Calcutta during the 1820's and Adam's place in it, consult W. Adam, *The Principles and Objects of the Calcutta Unitarian Committee*, Vol. CCVI of *India Office Library Tracts* (Calcutta: Unitarian Press, 1827).

The cause of the irreparable split was Rammohun's publication in 1820 of a pamphlet entitled *The Precepts of Jesus: The Guide to Peace and Happiness.* Joshua Marshman of Serampore was deeply angered and frustrated that an Indian should now openly challenge that hallowed inconsistency of Christianity, faith in the Trinity. The Bengali who, for years, the missionaries had hoped would become the Indian Luther now pushed his thinking on monotheism to its ultimate conclusion and engaged the Europeans on a most strategic point.

Rammohun argued that all major religions have a monotheistic tradition that had been perverted at different times by belief in "miracles and fabricated tales."[126] Comparing the ethical Jesus of the New Testament with the divine Jesus of present-day Christianity, to the detriment of the latter, Rammohun effectively demolished the Serampore Baptists' golden-age view of sixteenth-century Europe. In his *Second Appeal to the Christian Public in Defense of the Precepts of Jesus*, Rammohun continued his attack on such "fabricated fables" as "the doctrine of the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus on the cross,"[127] which he felt were all designed to establish "the false identity of Christ with God."[128] It is little wonder that the Unitarians in England proudly reprinted Rammohun's *Precepts* in several editions during the 1820's.[129]

In 1828 Rammohun and his followers (men such as Tagore and Tarachand Chakrabarti), founded the *Brahmo Sabha*, precursor of the later *Brahmo Samaj* (*Society of God*). These organizations were chiefly institutions founded on Rammohun Roy's purificationist or puritanical view of the Vedic golden age. The *Vedas* were chosen as the scriptural basis of the new reformed religion.[130] Because of Rammohun's conviction that Vedantic knowledge should be available to all, he insisted that the texts be published in

[126] R. Roy, *Precepts of Jesus, The Guide to Peace and Happiness* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1820), pp. 116–117.

[127] R. Roy, *Second Appeal in Defense of the Precepts of Jesus* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1821), p. 152.

[128] *Ibid.*, pp. 156–157.

[129] The earliest London reprint included the *Precepts* and the *Appeals* in one edition. See R. Roy, *Precepts of Jesus and are added to The First Second and Final Appeals in Reply to Dr. Marshman* (London: Unitarian Society, 1824).

[130] K. Sen, *A Brief History of the Calcutta Brahma Samaj*, Vol. CCCCXXXXII of *India Office Library Tracts* (Calcutta: G. P. Roy and Company, 1868), p. 12.

Bengali.[131] More important, Rammohun's basic idea that all major religions had similar traditions in spite of their diversity of form became the universalist credo of the *Samaj*. Indeed, this problem of unity and diversity that Rammohun raised but never resolved eventually became a major weakness in the *Brahmo* ranks throughout the century. The source of the weakness was a deep psychological conflict that accompanied the search for a new identity. The schism between Keshub Sen and Debendranath Tagore, for example, clearly represented the polarization between Rammohun's legacy of faith in the universality of mankind and the psychological need to maintain one's Hindu identity.

Keshub's letter to Debendranath of July 2, 1865, is a document typically reflecting a new generation's angry denunciation of its elders, whom it accused of Indianizing Brahmoism to the point where it had become another Hindu sect.[132] Keshub demanded that *Bŧahmos* discard their sacred threads once and for all; that the minister erase his caste marks; that women be accorded equal rights with men in the hall of worship; that intercaste marriage be permitted; and that new hymns to include passages from all the major faiths should be written.[133] Debendranath had already answered Keshub a year earlier when he defended the sacred thread and other attachments to Hinduism as symbols which, if rejected, would lead to complete "denationalization."[134]

It should also be stressed that the notion of a golden age of Indo-European peoples that commenced with Jones and was carried on by Colebrooke and Rammohun Roy differed considerably from the

[131] G. S. Leonard, *History of the Brahmo Samaj* (Calcutta: Haripada Mukherjea, 1879), p. 68.

[132] As one historian aptly puts it, "The Adi Brahmo Samaj cry was 'Brahmoism is Hinduism' but the younger Brahmos' cry was 'Brahmoism is catholic and universal.' " Quoted in N. S. Bose, p. 95.

[133] For a good discussion of these points in their proper context, see *ibid.*, pp. 92–95.

[134] On the other hand, it has also been argued that Keshub was as much opposed to denationalization as was Debendranath. One of his biographers offers Keshub's two tracts, *Young Bengal This is for You* and *An Appeal to Young India*, as proof that he sought to "halt the spirit of revolt and stop demoralization and denationalization that had begun to corrupt the Hindu society." See A. C. Banerji, "Brahmanda Keshub Chandra Sen," *Studies of the Bengal Renaissance*, p. 82. The author's impression is that Banerji is not covering up Sen's desire to have his cake and eat it but is expressing Sen's own later difficulty in reconciling his Hindu identity with his universalist sentiments.

later nineteenth-century view. The racist Aryan myth of a Hindu golden age that Max Müller did so much to popularize, and that was influential in later Indian thought, was a radical departure from the cultural beliefs of either Orientalists or *Brahmos*. When in 1883 Müller gave his famous speech commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of Rammohun Roy's death, he was expressing a view of Indian renaissance totally alien to Rammohun's own tradition. Müller referred to Rammohun as "the best representative of the South-Eastern Aryans,"[135] and interpreted Roy's trip to Europe as a gesture of "turning deliberately North, to shake hands once more with the most advanced outposts of the other branch of the Aryan family. . . ."[136] Thus a new age of revaluation dawned, and the eighteenth-century cosmopolitan reassessment of the Hindu golden age entered its second stage of Aryanized reinterpretation.

As noted in the last chapter, Rammohun's ideal of a golden age in the remote past that might serve as a model for future aspirations by no means represented the major sentiment either among Orientalists such as H. H. Wilson or the Bengali elite. Rejecting the metaphorical distinction between an age of gold and an age of darkness, most Indians actually seemed to value what Rammohun described as medieval excrescences.

Rammohun did not represent the majority of that small articulate group of Calcutta intelligentsia. The hard core of that generation (Deb, Tarinicharan Mitra, Ram Camul Sen, Russomoy Dutt, Bhabanicharan Bannerji, Mrtyunjay Vidyalankar) had little to do with Rammohun's schemes and organizations. Rammohun's Unitarian Committee, for example, established with the aid of a former Serampore missionary, never developed beyond a small circle comprising himself, Adam, and those two Anglicized Tagores, Dwarkanath and Prasanna Kumar.

It was not liberalism—moral or political—that separated Rammohun from his contemporaries but his rather dim view of post-Vedantic Hinduism and his theory of renaissance. Too often overlooked is the fact that both factions openly voiced their disapproval with existing abuses in Hindu culture and both espoused programs directed at its revitalization. To condemn Rammohun's opponents as traditionalist simply for their disagreement on the proper formula would be absurd. Also important is the fact that both clusters of

[135] Müller, *Biographical Essays*, p. 43.
[136] *Ibid.*

intellectuals shared a dubious form of modernization—at least from a westernizing point of view. In Orientalist fashion, they utilized the "West" syncretically as the proper means for realizing "traditional" ends.

Until the advent of Derozio at Hindu College (1828–1830), the Calcutta intelligentsia were modernizers of their own tradition rather than Westernizers. In this respect, Rammohun and his critics shared both a common identity in Hindu civilization (which they defended against Westernizers) and a common belief derived from Orientalism, that modernization could be achieved by pouring the new wine of modern functions into the old bottles of Indian cultural traditions. Since Indian traditions had continually changed to meet one challenge after another, it was hardly necessary to substitute alien traditions for those of the Hindus. The debate, therefore, was not between liberalism and conservatism, between the West and the East, or between tradition and modernity, but rather between two Orientalist-derived reinterpretations of the Indian heritage.

Furthermore, the Indian tradition that Westernizers tended to view as upper-caste, singular, and static had already changed considerably as a result of the Orientalist impact. From Mrtyunjay Vidyalankar's debate with Rammohun in 1817 to Radhakant's defense of *sati* in 1830, the intelligentsia's evolving conception of Hinduism differed greatly from the rambling, amorphous, and orally-conveyed eighteenth-century tradition in India. Between Tarkapanchanon in the age of William Jones and Mrtyunjay's first pamphlet in reply to Rammohun, the Orientalists had reshaped Hindu cultural traditions along systematic and rational lines.

The first published work expressing the new cultural attitudes toward the Hindu tradition was appropriately written by the most highly respected Calcutta Hindu scholar of his period, Mrtyunjay Vidyalankar. After serving as William Carey's chief pundit in the Bengali-Sanskrit Department of the College of Fort William for fifteen years, Mrtyunjay entered the service of the Supreme Court in 1816 as Francis Macnaughten's pundit.[137] A year later, at Macnaughten's request, this reputedly conservative Brahman wrote a brilliant treatise on *sati* in which he concluded that the custom violated the dictates of most authoritative *sastras*.[138] He not only

[137] See Bandyopadhyaỳ's introduction to *Mrtyuñjaỳ Granthābalī*, pp. vi–vii.

[138] See contemporary analysis of Mrtyunjay's position in *Friend of India*, II (October, 1819), 473–476.

condemned *sati* because of its deviation from scriptural authority, but also attacked it for being irrational and inhumane. At that time, *sati* had not yet become a symbol in a culture conflict and members of the intelligentsia were still flexible in their outlook. Mrtyunjay's position regarding *sati* was later transmitted to his countrymen in a pamphlet that constituted the first printed attack on the custom by a Bengali.[139]

Also in 1817, Mrtyunjay wrote the earliest of a long series of attacks by several Bengalis throughout the century on the *Brahmo* concept of Hindu religion and culture. His *Vedāntā Chandrikā* (*Moonlight of the Vedanta*), which was aimed directly against Rammohun's own view of the *Vedanta*, contained the germ of an idea of renaissance in which Mrtyunjay sought to challenge the puritanical image of a Vedic golden age. This work has not been given the serious attention of scholars, partly because of its pedantic and highly Sanskritized style of Bengali and partly because of the traditionalist reputation of its author. Nevertheless, the *Chandrikā* is extremely important in the historiography of the Indian renaissance because it contained a crude form of the same kind of Hindu revivalism that Vidyasagar and Vivekananda would express so meaningfully in prose and oratory at a later date.

On the surface, Mrtyunjay wrote a defense of *status quo* Hinduism in Bengal. He not only defended all the institutions, ideas, and practices of Hinduism throughout its long history but found no basic contradictions between later Hindu developments and those of the Vedantic period. He was angry with Rammohun Roy and his friends, those "intoxicated moderns,"[140] who were recklessly tampering with their faith and transforming it into a "marketplace theology."[141] The sacred literature should be expounded only by those especially trained for the task and not by dilettantes "pretending to Divine Knowledge . . . assuming the appearance of a lotus," and "adulterating the purity of the sacred writings."[142] Mrtyunjay defended the validity of the *Puranas* and saw no contradiction between their teachings and those of the *Vedanta*.[143] He also defended the worship of images[144] and, though it may seem

[139] Mrtyunjay's pamphlet was published in 1817, whereas Rammohun's first tract on *sati* appeared in 1818.

[140] Vidyālankār, "Bedanta chandrika," *Mrtyuñjay Granthābalī*, p. 22.

[141] *Ibid.*, p. 1.

[142] *Ibid.*

[143] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

[144] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

strange after his long years as a teacher and writer of Bengali, he disparaged the vernacular, comparing it to a "naked and prostituted female,"[145] whereas Sanskrit was depicted as a "beautiful and virtuous woman."[146]

Upon deeper examination, Mrtyunjay's argument appears quite different from the position of an eighteenth-century pundit. In this tract, he logically and lucidly defined Hinduism. He was not merely appealing to tradition (which now was, incidentally, a very selective tradition indeed) but was using it to win a debate on precisely how one would define Hinduism. Finally, though he might have condemned the vernacular (as some Brahmans still do), he chose to write the pamphlet in Bengali in order to transmit his ideas to other members of the intelligentsia.

One of the critical issues that separated Mrtyunjay from Rammohun was idolatry. Like his antagonist, he agreed that a stone or piece of wood was certainly not God. To Mrtyunjay, God was omnipresent and without attributes, but in order to fully concentrate on his Divinity, some "medium of materiality" was necessary.[147] In fact, Mrtyunjay took a position very different from that of the truly traditional pundit. He did not view image-worship as a necessary evil but as a necessary symbol. There were not 330,000,000 deities but that number of "representations of one true God."[148] Like Rammohun he warned, however, that the Vedas have declared that "He who entertains the notion of independent existence ([i.e.] . . . he who imagines a thing to exist apart from the Supreme Being), he is in great danger and will never achieve salvation."[149]

Actually, both Rammohun and Mrtyunjay argued from the same eighteenth-century position on the universality of all cultures that was the commonly shared component in the Orientalist value system. In the same way that Rammohun contended that monotheism was the authentic tradition in all major religions, Mrtyunjay argued in the *Chandrikā* that the use of idols was likewise an authentic tradition in those religions. If Rammohun valued the strong iconoclasm in the Jewish, New Testament, and Mohammedan traditions, Mrtyunjay pointed to the use of idols among ancient

[145] *Ibid.*, p. 28.
[146] *Ibid.*
[147] *Ibid.*, p. 7.
[148] *Ibid.*
[149] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

Greeks, other Asian peoples, and the Roman Catholics in Western Europe.[150] Furthermore, just as the universality of Rammohun's Vedic cultural image would become Aryanized in the service of racism, the universality of Mrtyunjay's image of Hindu restoration would be reinterpreted by later neo-Hindu revivalists to serve their bitter polemic with the West.

Tracts, journals, and newspapers not only helped produce a feeling of cultural identity among the intelligentsia through the transmission of cultural attitudes but, along with newly published books, also promoted the creation of a corresponding social identity and solidarity. The new cultural attitudes did not exist in a social vacuum. They originated in a class of professional intellectuals developed largely as a result of close European contacts, special training, and European-style occupational status within the institutional environment of the College of Fort William.[151] The group's response to urban Calcutta, their professional role in British-oriented institutions, their prolonged relationships with different kinds of Europeans, and their recently acquired wealth, knowledge, and values were the distinguishing characteristics of this new social elite (see Table 5).

In 1823, Bhabanicharan Bannerji, the editor of the *Samāchār chandrikā*, published an original sociological work describing the life and manners of Bengalis in Calcutta. He entitled his book *Kalikātā kamalālāy* (which might be translated as "Calcutta: dwelling-place of the goddess of fortune"). The fact that this was an original prose work on a contemporary subject, written in Bengali by a high-caste Brahman, indicates the extent of sociocultural change that had occurred during the Orientalist period. Bhabanicharan's book was of great value in that it may have been the first attempt by a member of the intelligentsia to hold a literary looking-glass before his peers so that they might better perceive their own social image.

When Bhabanicharan published the *Kamalālāy* he was already an accepted member of the new class, having acquired his professional training in British government offices and commercial firms.[152] His

[150] *Ibid.*, p. 22.

[151] *Supra*, pp. 108–126.

[152] When sixteen years old, Bhabanicharan worked for the agency house J. Dukett and Company. Eleven years later he left the firm and took various new positions, including that of secretary of Middleton, the Anglican bishop

reputation for bilingual fluency and wit was widespread in Calcutta circles,[153] and it was he whom Rammohun chose to be an editor of one of the first Indian-language vernacular newspapers, the *Sambād kaumudī*.[154] Disagreement over cultural values estranged the two men, and Bhabanicharan left the paper in 1822 to found one of his own, the *Chandrikā*,[155] adopting a cultural position that was perhaps more representative of the prevailing sentiments of the intelligentsia. While Radhakant Deb, the future leader of the "conservative" wing, was only beginning in the early 1820's, to acquire professional and intellectual maturity through his work in educational societies, Bhabanicharan seems to have assumed the actual leadership of the non-Rammohun intellectuals. It was therefore understandable that he should be the first to write a descriptive social commentary on his class.

The *Kamalālāy* was ostensibly intended to be a guidebook for rural Bengalis coming to the metropolis of Calcutta for the first time in hope of settling there.[156] The book purported to explain how the Bengali city-dwellers differed from the village-dwellers and consequently attempted to set the country people at ease about the townsmen's strange habits and speech.[157] Bhabanicharan employed the interesting device of a dialogue between a townsman and a villager to describe the social structure of the Bengali Babu.[158]

In the first pages, Calcutta was described as a "bottomless ocean of wealth" attracting thousands in search of fortune.[159] The city

of Calcutta, and chief assistant to the Hooghly Collector. See biography of Bhabānīcharan Bandyopādhyāy in *Samāchār chandrikā* (June 8, 1848), quoted in B. N. Bandyopādhyāy, *Bhabānīcharan Bandyopādhyāy* (S-s-c series, 1959), pp. 7–10.

[153] *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[154] There is some doubt whether he was the editor or the editor's assistant. See *ibid.*, pp. 16–17.

[155] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[156] B. C. Bandyopādhyāy, *Kalikātā Kamalālāy* (originally published in 1823), reprinted by B. N. Bandyopādhyāy, ed. (Haśprāpya Granthamālā series: Kalikātā: Rañjan Pābliśim Hāus, 1951), pp. 1–2.

[157] Bhabanicharan's use of terms is interesting: *Nagarbāsī* is the townsman, *palligrāmanibāsī* the villager. To denote the new phenomenon of metropolitan Calcutta he uses *mahānagar*, or great city.

[158] Bhabanicharan does not always clearly distinguish between the new Babu class of professional intellectuals and the absentee land-owning gentry of Calcutta, which he calls *bhadralok*, or class of cultivated gentlemen. See B. C. Bandyopādhyāy, *Kamalālāy*, p. 8.

[159] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Table 5

THE TRANSFORMATION OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LITERATI IN CALCUTTA, 1800–1830

Name and Date of Birth	*Place of Origin*	*Caste*	*Languages of Early Education*	*Main European Contacts*	*Profession (As Intellectual)*	*Sociocultural Institution*
Bannerji, Bhabinicharan, b. 1787	Twenty-four pargannahs	Brahman	Sanskrit English	Agency houses; Anglican Bishop Middleton	Editor *Samāchār chandrikā*; prose satyrist	*Gaudia Samaj*
Basu Ramram, b. 1757	Twenty-four pargannahs	Kayastha	Persian, Sanskrit	Serampore Mission; College of Fort William; William Carey	Linguist; stylist in Bengali prose; historian	Serampore Mission
Bhattacharya Gangakishore, b. ?	?	Brahman	?	Serampore Mission Press; William Ward	Editor of *Bengali Gazette*; book publisher and dealer	?
Vidyalankar, Mrytunjay, b. 1762	Midnapur	Brahman	Sanskrit	College of Fort William; William Carey	Linguist; stylist in Bengali prose; translator	Hindu College; Calcutta School and School Book Societies
Deb, Radhakant, b. 1783	Calcutta	Sudra (?)	Persian, English, Urdu, Sanskrit	Calcutta School and School Book Societies; Mack; Carey; H. H. Wilson	Author of texts; translator; supervisor Calcutta schools	Hindu College; *Gaudia Samaj*; etc.

Dutt, Rossumoy, b. 1780	**Calcutta**	**Brahman**	**Sanskrit, Persian, English**	**Agency House; Administration**	**Clerk; judge, Small-Claims Court**	***Gaudia Samaj***
Mitra, Tarinicharan, b. 1772	**Calcutta**	**Brahman**	**Persian, English, Urdu, Sanskrit**	**College of Fort William; John Gilchrist**	**Linguist; Urdu prose stylist**	**Calcutta School and School Book Societies**
Roy, Rammohun, b. 1772 (?)	**Hugli (District)**	**Brahman**	**Persian, Sanskrit, Tibetan (?)**	**Civil Service; John Digby; missionaries; William Adam**	**Clerk, Civil Service; Bengali prose stylist; journalist**	***Brahmo Sabha;* Unitarian Committee**
Sen, Ram Camul, b. 1783	**Hugli (District)**	**Kashatriya (?)**	**Persian, Sanskrit, missionary English**	**Hindoostanee Press; Asiatic Society of Bengal; H. H. Wilson**	**Printer; native secretary Asiatic Society**	**Hindu College**
Tarkalankar, Jay Gopal, b. 1775	**Nadiya**	**Brahman**	**Sanskrit**	**Serampore Mission; John Clark Marshman**	**Native editor *Samāchār darpan***	**Serampore Mission**
Tagore, Dwarkanath, b. 1794	**Calcutta**	**Brahman**	**Persian, English, Sanskrit**	**Agency houses; administration**	**Civil Service; entrepreneur; publisher**	***Brahmo Sabha;* Unitarian Committee**
Tagore, Mohun Prasad, b. ?	**?**	**Brahman ?**	**?**	**College of Fort William**	**Librarian**	**Serampore Mission**

SOURCE: Compiled principally from Sāhitya-Sādhak-Charitmālā Series (Kalikātā: Bangiya Sāhitya Parishat).

was unique in offering so many different ways of accumulating worldly goods. Those who were most successful in capitalizing on their opportunities became "purse-proud"[160] and began to follow a new mode of living that seemed totally alien to their village cousins.[161]

Initially, however, the newcomer to Calcutta found himself bewildered by the different kinds of people he mixed with on the street.[162] He soon realized that the road to financial gain was through the European, who controlled the money but needed the menial, clerical, or linguistic assistance of the native. If the Bengali was resourceful he would learn some English and persist in his effort until he found employment with the European. By serving his master well and by adapting his work habits, the Bengali was well on his way to a life of relative ease. Later, after having accumulated some money, he would probably invest it in land.[163]

Bhabanicharan distinguished this new class (which he divided into intelligentsia and absentee gentry) not only from the rural elite but also from the more traditional members of the literati in Calcutta. He betrayed his own cultural ambivalence by writing the first of many satirical sketches on the Calcutta Babu who had fallen away from his ancestral customs and duties. Nevertheless, he condoned Bengali participation in the Orientalist institutions promoting revitalization. In one section he condemned the members of the new middleclass for having lost their Hindu heritage and for reducing their religion to an occasional gift to a pundit.[164] He also accused them of spending so much intellectual effort in learning English and Persian in order to advance themselves professionally that they were left with little time to study the *sastras*.[165] Some had gone so far in disgracing themselves and their families that they could not or would not perform *śraddh* (funeral rites) for a departed parent.[166]

Yet, much later in the book, Bhabanicharan praised the Babu's

[160] The term used is *dhanamattatādi*, employed by the author to denote a new feeling of status based on wealth.

[161] B. C. Bandyopādhyāy, *Kamalālāy*, p. 4.

[162] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

[163] Again, there is a confusion between the intelligentsia with moderate means and the wealthier *bhadralok* financially able to invest in land. Some apparently belonged to both categories. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

[164] *Ibid.*, pp. 10–11.

[165] *Ibid.*, p. 11.

[166] *Ibid.*

modern, cultivated habits evidenced by his support of literary and educational reform. The Babu bought books of all sorts (although he did not always read them) and proudly boasted of a library in his home.[167] Because of his patronage of printed works, bookstores had multiplied in Calcutta and knowledge was a sought-after commodity.[168] It was the new class of Babus who established Hindu College and currently sponsored the noteworthy Calcutta School Book and School Societies.[169] They had also provided scholarships for needy students.[170]

It should be added that although Bhabanicharan criticized his own class for their unorthodox ways, he was also highly critical of the orthodox pundits in Calcutta, who not only inflexibly and dogmatically resisted change but were also guilty of selfishly craving riches.[171] As he portrayed them they were gossipy, factional, hypocritical, corrupt, and to a large extent surprisingly ignorant of Hindu learning.[172] This is an important point, for however much Bhabanicharan and others in his class championed the orthodox cause, they did not identify themselves with the authentic eighteenth-century literati. Standing between these two groups was a newly formed cultural tradition and social consciousness.

The class that he described and to which he himself belonged was, therefore, a distinctively new social grouping in India. It was composed of an elite and an intelligentsia. The class was urban, not rural; it was literate and sophisticated; its status was founded more on wealth than on caste; it was a professional, not a literati, group; it was receptive to new knowledge, ideas, and values; it absorbed new attitudes and its intellectuals created a syncretic cultural tradition; and perhaps most important, it mentally transcended kin and caste and thought in broader social terms.

[167] *Ibid.*, pp. 36–37.
[168] *Ibid.*, p. 39.
[169] *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[170] *Ibid.*
[171] *Ibid.*, pp. 33–34.
[172] *Ibid.*, pp. 26–29.

PART V

Macaulayism and the Decline and Fall of the Orientalist Movement 1828-1835

We are among the people, but not of them. We rule over them and traffic with them, but they do not understand our character and we do not penetrate theirs. The consequence is that we have no hold on their sympathies, no seat in their affections.

—WILLIAM ADAM TO LORD BENTINCK

There are some who are exclusively modern, who believe that the past is the bankrupt time, leaving no assets for us, but only a legacy of debts. They refuse to believe that the army which is marching forward can be fed from the rear. It is well to remind such persons that the great ages of renaissance in history were those when man suddenly discovered the seeds of thought in the granary of the past.

—RABINDRANATH TAGORE

XIII

A Return to the Exile Mentality and the Dissolution of the College of Fort William

In 1820, the venerable, indefatigable William Carey entered his third decade of service for Wellesley's "University of the East." It was to be his last. His long-time colleague in the Hindoostanee Department, Thomas Roebuck, had died in 1819 and the fifth Urdu professor in twenty years, Major J. W. Taylor, succeeded him.[1] Mathew Lumsden, the Arabic-Persian professor who had served the college for eighteen years, left India for the last time in April of 1820.[2] His successor, Lt. Ayton, was another of the dashing military officers who now dominated the faculty. Lt. D. Bryce was the second professor of Persian, and the teaching of Hindi (more and more generally regarded as the "Hindu" vernacular) was shared between Major Taylor and Captain W. Price.[3]

In the 1820's, skirmishes broke out anew between Carey, representing Bengali, and his competitors, representing Urdu and Hindi. Actually, Urdu was as much on the defensive against Hindi as was Bengali.

In 1822, when the College Council contemplated reducing the native faculty of the Bengali department while leaving the other departments at full strength, Carey sent in a strong letter of protest. Burning with indignation, he wrote:

[1] PCFW, DLXVI (May 1, 1820), 111.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 92–93.
[3] *Ibid.* (May 28, 1821), p. 401.

> Convinced as I am that the Bengalee language is superior in point of intrinsic merit to every language spoken in India, and in point of real utility yields to none, I can never persuade myself to advise a step which would place it in a degraded point of view in the College. While therefore as [a] first and second pundit are retained in the Persian and Hindoostanee Departments I must consider them as equally necessary in this.[4]

The Council, composed largely of his former students, upheld Carey.

In 1823, Taylor, now a colonel, advocated that the Council divert college resources into an ambitious program of Hindi development.[5] In his view, Hindi and Urdu or some mixture "between these with various shades of difference may be comprehended as encompassing most of the Dialects of the different Provinces under this Presidency."[6]

But the vernacular struggle had in fact just entered a new phase, for in 1824 Carey brought out a complete edition of his monumental *Dictionary of the Bengali Language*, containing 85,000 words.[7] This edition was an incredible achievement, which marked the culmination of almost thirty years of painstaking work. Though it may have met with disinterest at the college, it had a significant effect on the Bengalis themselves.

On November 16, 1824, Carey submitted a plan to the College Council in which he advocated a radical departure from the customary patronage policy of the college. He argued that it was no longer necessary to support only philological works or elementary literature in the form of textbooks for student use.[8] Unlike Urdu and Hindi, Bengali could now boast original prose works on a wide range of subjects by Bengali writers. Bengalis now wrote tracts debating contemporary philosophic and religious problems;[9] they conducted their own newspapers in the vernacular; and, in 1823,

[4] *Ibid.*, DLXVII (August 13, 1822), 65–66.

[5] *Ibid.* (May 27, 1823), pp. 228–230.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] With his usual thoroughness, Carey not only analyzed all compound words but examined their signification etymologically and semantically. In 1827–1828, J. C. Marshman published an abridged edition in which he eliminated many "useless" nouns dealing with plants and animals.

[8] PCFW, DLXVII (November 16, 1824), 510–512.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 511.

an excellent and popular Bengali work on social commentary in Bengali had been published.[10] Carey therefore believed that the time had come for the college to take an active part in this literary renaissance. The Council might begin by sponsoring an original work on Indian history. Carey then criticized the *Rajaboli*, written several years earlier by his former chief pundit, Mrtyunjay Vidyalankar,[11] and regretted that it was still being used as a college textbook in Indian history:

> The Rajavalee was . . . intended to be a history of Hindoosthan. This work would have been highly valuable had it been properly filled up with the incidents, and details of circumstances which occurred during the reign of the different princes, but for want of that it is little more than a dry chronicle of the more striking events which occurred and has been found unfit for the purpose [for] which it was intended.[12]

Not only did the Council reject Carey's plan but, during the year 1825, Carey found his beloved Bengali department threatened once more in the latest reassertion of the primacy of Hindi. Understandably, the Council was perhaps less interested in the Bengali literary renaissance than they were in adequately training personnel to administer the new territories in which Hindi was spoken.[13] Carey, in one letter to the Council, emphasized that an attempt was being made to remove pundits from his Bengali and Sanskrit department simply because they did not know Hindi.[14]

Carey managed to save his pundits and his department and the number of students in his classes even increased, astonishingly, from three in 1825 to thirty-four in 1828.[15] Though the records do not disclose what methods he used in his fight for survival, Carey had obviously profited from long years of internal politics at the college.

The customary college activities were continued during the 1820's without any notable change. The Court of Directors still

[10] Carey probably had in mind Rammohun Roy's numerous debates in the vernacular and Roy's newspaper, the *Sambād kaumudī* (est. 1821). The social satire was probably the *Kalikātā kamalālāy* by Bhabānicharan Bandyopādhyāy.

[11] *Supra*, pp. 124–125.

[12] PCFW, DLXVII (November 16, 1824), 511.

[13] *Ibid.*, DLXVIII (August 23, 1825), p. 266.

[14] *Ibid.* (January 14, 1825), pp. 27–29.

[15] *Ibid.*, DLXX (July 3, 1828), 20.

authorized a yearly budget of 150,000 rupees, and literary patronage—though reduced—was still substantial[16] (see Table 6). The library, now public, was enriched by Brian Hodgson's Tibetan and Nepali manuscript collections.[17] From college records it is evident that the library was quite actively used. In 1824, some 1,284 volumes were circulated among the public; of these, 409 unfor-

Table 6

FORT WILLIAM COLLEGE: EXPENDITURES, AND AMOUNTS SPENT FOR LITERARY PATRONAGE, 1812–1827

(in rupees)

Year	*Aggregate total*	*Literary patronage*
1812	181,068	28,018
1813	203,014	35,409
1814	197,183	26,602
1815	191,124	41,011
1816	158,619	14,981
1817	147,516	15,121
1818	156,649	17,745
1819	135,504	13,668
1820	?	19,829
1821	123,331	?
1822	136,764	9,114
1823	128,114	?
1824	116,473	4,990
1825	135,497	21,185
1826	126,500	8,330
1827	139,636	7,722

SOURCE: Compiled from Proceedings of the College of Fort William, *Home Miscellaneous Series*. Indian National Archives, New Delhi.

[16] Grants varied from year to year, depending on the extent and kind of work being supported. In 1825, an average year, grants amounted to 21,185 rupees. Carey's *Bengalee Dictionary* cost 10,000 rupees; a *Burmese Dictionary* 2,000 rupees; a *Bootan Dictionary* 7,435 rupees; an *English-Burmese Vocabulary* 1,000 rupees; and a *Turkish Vocabulary* 750 rupees. *Ibid.*, DLXVIII (December 26, 1826), 490.

[17] Carey first appealed to the Council on behalf of Hodgson in a letter of December 21, 1824. He justified the huge expense involved in shipping this collection to Calcutta by maintaining that it would "throw light upon the Religions and Literature of the inhabitants of the Himalayan range of mountains." *Ibid.*, DLXVII (December 21, 1824), 449.

tunately were never returned.[18] New languages continued to be systematized,[19] new textbooks were published,[20] and the usual plethora of new projects was proposed to the Council. Therefore, on the eve of the Bentinck administration, the College of Fort William was apparently in the full vigor of institutional health.

(Although, on the faculty level of the college, all seemed well with the world of Orientalism, on the student level the older Hastings-Wellesley ideal encountered serious difficulty.)

In February, 1822, College Council Member Holt Mackenzie penned a minute deploring the new wave of indiscipline at the College of Fort William.[21] He noted a serious lapse in "studies and proficiency."[22] In the sixth chapter of statutes, promulgated in May, 1822, the governor-general warned the students that if they made nó progress in the first two months of their studies, the professors would be obliged to report them to the Council, who were then to consider the possibility of expulsion.[23] This warning was supplemented by the authorization of new monetary prizes to encourage higher proficiency in languages.[24]

(In 1823, for the first time in college history, no disputations were recorded.) The annual event was now described in newspapers merely as the "annual awarding of prizes."[25] Regrettably, according to John Adam, acting governor-general and the Visitor for that year's graduation ceremony on July 18, there were too few students meriting awards. Indeed, reported Adam, of the sixteen students who should have graduated that year "only three were reported qualified by proficiency in the required two languages to enter the public services."[26]

(Throughout this decade, Fort William produced no more than

[18] *Ibid.*

[19] The new languages included Tibetan, Nepalese, Burmese, and Bhutanese.

[20] Some of the more interesting textbooks published in the 1820's for college use were H. H. Wilson's *Sanscrit Plays* (1825), Wilson's new edition of the *Futawa Alengiri* on Muslim law (1826), Brigg's new translation of the *Ferishta* (1826–1830), and Wilson's new version of a *Sanscrit Dictionary* (1827).

[21] PCFW, DLXVI (April 1, 1822), 563–567.

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 564.

[23] *Ibid.*, DLXVII (July 25, 1822), 47.

[24] *Ibid.*, DLXVI (May 6, 1822), 599–600.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] *Ibid.*

a handful of proficient scholars. Only four of them—Colvin, Trevelyan, Thomason and Marshall—were able to earn high-proficiency awards in at least two Indian languages.) In 1827, on the eve of Bentinck's ascent to administration, the College Council expelled thirteen students for "idleness" and sent them to remote stations in East Bengal and Orissa.[27] For the Orientalists, the most crushing blow of all fell when truly gifted and outstanding students turned radically against them. A noteworthy case in point is that of Charles Trevelyan (class of 1827), who mastered Hindi and Persian with honours,[28] but later reacted violently against the Orientalists and became an outspoken leader of the Anglicists.

(It may seem ironic that the Calcutta elite ultimately accepted Orientalism whereas the British civil servants, for whom it was originally designed, did not. At the same time that Orientalist programs profoundly influenced Bengali intellectuals in the 1820's, several English officials challenged the Warren Hastings-Wellesley ideal by ridiculing it in satirical verse.)

This turn of events might be explained on the ground that the philosophy of an Orientalized public servant, which Wellesley sought to routinize at the College of Fort William, never permeated the lower ranks of the service. There is little doubt that that philosophy attracted and helped transform the most able of the elite. From the time of Warren Hastings the highest positions were reserved for those who demonstrated linguistic proficiency, a deep understanding of India, and a sense of benevolent responsibility in regard to the Indian people. Consequently, for many who did not make the grade and were assigned lesser posts in the interior, disappointment and resentment may have encouraged a negative response to Orientalism.

The satirical literary movement against Orientalism was apparently prompted by the appearance in Calcutta, in 1819, of Lord Byron's eagerly awaited *Don Juan.* Byron's literary style and predominant mood of melancholy were immediately imitated by those Company servants who felt that they had a flair for poetic composition. It was not long before the fate-bemoaning verses of Fort William graduates assigned to jungle posts appeared in print:

> Reader adiew!—when next I court thy eye
> Th' amusements of the city I'll recite
> For which alas! I daily pine and sigh,

[27] *Ibid.*, DLIX (n. d.), 630.
[28] "Medals of Merit Awards," *ibid.*, DLXVIII (July, 1827), 183.

Lamenting I'm a poor Mofussilite
Nailed to a station which gives me no delight
Would I could get a sick certificate,
I'd hasten down and renovate my sight,
With all Calcutta charms, but helpless fate,
Denies the hopes and keeps me here to vegetate.[29]

The Orientalists, especially the professors at the College of Fort William, became targets of merciless satire. All the existing evils of India, which Orientalists generally ignored in favor of the more scintillating historic past, were defiantly satirized by new, self-discovered poets.

In June, 1820, the *Calcutta Journal* printed the first of the "Byronic" poems by local talent. The title was rather long: "Letter from Sir Anthony Fudge to his Friend, Sir Gabriel, #36 Writers' Building, Calcutta." (It should be recalled that the Writers' Building served as the dormitory for Fort William students.) As was the custom then, the epic was unsigned. The poem related the adventures of an employee recently assigned to a remote jungle station. He not only experienced disaster after disaster but discovered that his associates there were distasteful beyond endurance. He was an exile learning to resign himself to his fate. Of particular interest is the poet's view of his college career in Calcutta. His employer, "a rum sort of fellow," was impressed with Fudge's credentials from the College of Fort William:

He seemed to be glad when I told him my knowledge
Acquired in the languages down at the College
Had induced the good folks, comme mon droit, to award
Some prizes and Medals, by way of reward;
But they seem'd to be cracked, when I added just after,
(My face as demure as it could be from laughter), . . .
That the prizes of Books, being mouldy and old,
I'd sent to an auction to try to get sold;
And that the Diploma, or rather Degree,
With which they'd the goodness to decorate me,
I'd affixed to a drum, and had made it a toy
For the use and diversion of Billy, my boy. . . .[30]

One of the most readable of these heavyhearted odes was printed in the *Calcutta Journal* in installments, beginning on July 16, 1821. Entitled "Ruin: A Familiar Tale of the East in Two Cantos," the

[29] "Canto," *Government Gazette*, VIII (September 5, 1822).

[30] "Letter from Sir Anthony Fudge to his Friend, Sir Gabriel, #36 Writers' Building, Calcutta," *Calcutta Journal*, III (June 27, 1820), 675.

poem has as its subject "the progressive History of a young Officer, who enters the Service of the Company, quits his parents with regret, . . . leaving behind him a young lady who was strongly and unalterably attracted to him."[31] The first canto opens with the usual tribute to the master:

> Byron—thou proud epitome of all,
> That men adore and hate,—abhor and hail;
> Thou strange antithesis, whose witcheries call
> The Genii of the mind within the pale
> Of minstrel mastery. . . .
> Yet Byron—yet I love thee;—thou art as
> A drug, that in its subtle drunkenness,
> Steals us to sweet delirium. . . .[32]

The poem is particularly interesting for the reaction of a young "exile" to India. He perceived himself alone in an alien, exotic land and felt terribly homesick for his England. At the college, he indulged in the "freaks and follies of the students" and could only deride the glowing descriptions of the City of Palaces. His habits grew intemperate and soon he "drinks to forget." Eventually "abandoned even by his friends," he finally put an end to his "dreadful life."

Perhaps the most interesting of the poems being considered here was first printed in the *Calcutta Journal* of January, 1822, under the title of "Rinaldo, or the Incipient Judge, A Tale of Writers' Building." The main character, Rinaldo, "a Dandy of renown," was the kind of idle student who was becoming more and more common at the college in the 1820's:

> Not one of his associates could own
> So fine a stud or pack as he kept there
> Nor one of the Civilians in Town
> With him in table, dress, or style compare,
> He was the Exquisite—Bang-up—the thing,
> Whether to hunt, race, drive, drink, dance or sing.[33]

This work is one of the most revealing available descriptions of a student's life at Fort William during that time. We learn that Rinaldo had a "mistress who loved him for his lovingness."[34] We dis-

[31] "Ruin, A Familiar Tale of the East in Two Cantos," *Calcutta Journal*, IV (July 16, 1821), 191.
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] "Rinaldo, or the Incipient Judge, A Tale of Writers' Building," *Calcutta Journal*, V (January 22, 1822), 228.
[34] *Ibid.*

cover that exhibiting good taste in "wine and mess" was probably more important to the fop than learning any of the esoteric languages of the East.[35] Readily furnished with funds by the Bengali money lenders located near the College, the Fort William dandy even went out of his way to win the respect of jockeys by laying "precious bets." In one verse, Rinaldo's "scholarly" activities in the college classroom are summarized:

> He studied Persian for a year or more,
> And Hindoostanee at the same time read;
> He did not relish much the bore
> Of filling with these languages his head,
> But by degrees he so improved his store
> Of 'vox et nil praetera,' that he made
> Proficiency in Oriental knowledge
> Sufficient to pass out, last year.[36]

Upon graduation, Rinaldo is sent to a post in the country, far from Calcutta, and his reaction to the new surroundings was fashionably in the style of the Byronic exile:

> Rinaldo did not well endure
> The dullness of a country life at first:
> It was so tame, insipid, and demure,
> Ten thousand, thousand times he daily cursed
> The fate which had bad influence to lure
> Him from the best unto the very worst;
> I mean from the society of town
> Unto the vulgar circle of the clown.[37]

Obviously, Rinaldo was not responding to his new official responsibilities in the manner recommended by Orientalists:

> Mofussil is indeed a mopish place
> Particularly to a man of taste
> And spirit, like Rinaldo, with a face
> Adapted to attract; as he is placed,
> Where he cannot shew off his knowing grace,
> To any purpose, and is doom'd to 'waste,'
> Like flow'rs, 'his sweetness in the desert air,'
> Without the chance of waiting on the fair.[38]

It is interesting to note how little Rinaldo was concerned either with official duties or the culture of the local inhabitants. In Ri-

[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid.*
[37] *Ibid.* (February 1, 1822), p. 332.
[38] *Ibid.*

naldo's case, the training at Haileybury and Fort William, designed to produce a competent, serious-minded administrator, certainly had been a costly failure. In these poems of "exile" we search in vain for descriptions of the British civil servant in contact with the Indian people. We learn instead of relationships between one European and another. In the following lines the author depicted the other European gentlemen serving with Rinaldo:

> The gentlemen were equally to blame
> For the stupidity of their discourse,
> Which dwelt eternally upon the same
> Stale subjects—now the action of a horse
> Or goodness of a Mouton—or the fame
> Of terriers and greyhounds in a course.
> They smoked their hookahs, swigg'd a bowl of gin
> And got half drunk before they would turn in.[39]

On the other hand, the poet, in a fleeting moment of "serious" reflection, seems to suggest that Rinaldo's training was inadequate for his official duties:

> Our Hero much of Persian had persu'd
> And Hindoostanee, as I sang before;
> But as the books in College that are used
> Are chiefly works on literary lore,
> He felt himself excessively confused. . . .[40]

An additional reason for Rinaldo's professional failure was, according to the author, the climate:

> But soon he found in this ungenial clime
> He could not bear to go there [office] everyday
> Without the risk of hurrying in his prime
> To mingle his with his forefather's clay;
> For could he hope in India to survive
> Diurnal toil from nine or ten 'till five?[41]

In 1825, when Holt Mackenzie[42] became president of the College Council, the question arose among its members as to whether or not Fort William had indeed outlived its usefulness. Mackenzie was

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] *Ibid.* (February 16, 1822), p. 488.

[41] *Ibid.*

[42] Holt Mackenzie, after distinguishing himself at the College of Fort William in Urdu, Persian, and Bengali, was retained in Calcutta and ascended the hierarchy in the customary stages: first as Sudder Court Registrar (1810),

the only member who urged the abolition of the college. His critique of Wellesley's scheme and his proposed solution for the general problem of training civil servants in India reflected not only an empirical mind but a strongly individualistic one as well. In fact, Mackenzie in this 1825 Minute of the Council became one of the first responsible government officials to advocate the Indianization of the civil service (closed to Indians by Cornwallis' 1791 Regulation), whose many functions he felt "could be performed cheaper and better by Natives."[43] He realized, however, that such a move would never be sanctioned in London. In his summation, Mackenzie reviewed the salient points of his argument:

> Wellesley erred in over-estimating the importance of the civilians coming to the Country at an early age: he doubtless underestimated the difficulty of establishing such an Institution as he projected in India. And he does not appear sufficiently to have weighed the difficulties arising out of the mode in which the nomination is made to civil appointments. He propsed indeed to give certain advantages to the possessors of collegiate honors. But he overlooked the jealousy with which any extended system of selection in this Country would justly be regarded at home: still further the fact that when the number of Offices approaches so near the number of candidates, no really effective selection is practicable; and that any plan which should render civilians insecure in the tenure of their offices, though it might render them more zealous in forwarding the wishes of Government would probably render them less faithful in their duties to the Country.[44]

Mackenzie advocated abolishing the college, extending the linguistic program at Haileybury, and compelling students to study "during their long voyage to India." In connection with the latter suggestion, he thought a prize of 800 rupees might be offered "to anyone who during that time might master some moderately easy oriental work."[45] Finally, he believed that a "legal restriction" should be put on the lending of money to civil servants.[46]

then as Translator of Regulations (1813), and finally as Secretary in the Territorial Department (1817–1831). He was an original member of the General Committee on Public Instruction (1823) and President of the College of Fort William Council (1825). For more information see *General Register of Company Servants*, p. 217.

[43] PCFW, DLXVIII (April 2, 1825), p. 112.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 119.

[45] *Ibid.*

[46] *Ibid.*

During this debate, the problem of student indebtedness loomed large. That money was readily available is indicated by the verse of an anonymous civil servant:

> And there are Baboos rich and fat and greasy,
> Who prowl around the Cranny barracks ever,
> With bags full of Rupees to tempt and please ye,
> And lean Sirkars "in Master's business clever,"
> That is who fool and money—try to sever,
> And bonds usurious—compound interest.
> And promises to Relatives whenever
> In some good situation you are placed,
> To let them have the plundering of the pidgeon's nest.[47]

J. H. Harington, the veteran jurist and old friend of Wellesley and the college,[48] argued that this "noble institution" should not be abolished simply because some students, as Mackenzie charged, "incurred a debt which the most prudent find it difficult to discharge in ten or twelve years."[49] Indeed, he doubted the accuracy of Mackenzie's ten- to twelve-year figure. If the college enforced existing rules, he felt, the problem of debts would disappear. Harington saw no reason for all this fuss since "the young men graduating from the College have done well."[50] Besides, the college had "the advantage of twenty-five years of experience" in training civil servants.[51]

William B. Bayley,[52] who was one of Wellesley's first students at the college, reechoed Harington's defense of the institution. He

[47] "To a Friend in England," *Government Gazette*, Vol. VIII (August 29, 1822).

[48] J. H. Harington had been a chief judge in the Sudder Dewani Adaulat since 1811. In 1823, he was named a member of the Supreme Council. His connection with the College of Fort William can be traced as far back as its inception in 1801, when he served as a law specialist. In 1809, he was President of the College Council, and he served on the Council intermittently until his death in 1828. In 1813 he won college support for his important work, *The Analysis of Laws and Regulations by the Governor-General-in-Council.*

[49] PCFW, DLXVIII (December 27, 1824), 102.

[50] *Ibid.*

[51] *Ibid.*

[52] William Butterworth Bayley gradually worked his way upward in the hierarchy until he became Hastings's chief secretary in 1819. In 1821, Bayley served on the Supreme Council and four years later became its leading member. He was an original member of the General Committee on Public Instruction in 1823. In the early months of 1828, while Calcutta awaited Bentinck's arrival, Bayley acted as provisional governor-general.

offered a plausible explanation for the increase in student indebtedness, stating that, even though the cost of living had risen substantially "since Cornwallis' time, thirty-five years ago," the allowances for the incoming civil servants had remained the same.[53] He urged that the Council raise initial pay and offer liberal advances during the student's first two months in Calcutta.[54]

Amherst, the governor-general, ended the controversy by supporting Bayley's scheme. On April 21, 1825, he stated that the college would continue to exist unaltered and that "an advance of two or three thousand Rupees would be made to any newly arrived Student really in want of pecuniary assistance, to be repaid without interest by moderate installments."[55]

In December, 1827, the Court of Directors despatched a bitter letter to the College Council reviewing the problem of indebtedness among the civil servants in Bengal.[56] They reported that among the twelve worst cases, the average debt was 120,000 rupees per man.[57] Shocked that one-half of the total number of servants in the Bengal Presidency were still paying off debts incurred during their student days at the college,[58] the Court concluded with a suggestion that incoming servants might avoid Calcutta entirely and be sent immediately to the "interior" to be trained under experienced officers.[59] In addition, the Court expected the new governor-general to commence an investigation of the college but would not consider abolishing it "until all facts and opinions" were ascertained.[60]

The merits and demerits of the College of Fort William, and whether it should be continued or discontinued, were already being argued by the College Council when Bentinck arrived in Calcutta on August 1, 1828. In many ways, this debate of 1828–29 was similar to that of 1825. The Orientalists argued that the problem of indebtedness was peripheral to the main issue, which was the existence of the college as an effective training center for civil servants. All the Orientalists believed that the college succeeded admirably in this purpose. Three of the Minutes in which the debate

[53] PCFW, DLXVIII (January 2, 1825), 106.
[54] *Ibid.*
[55] *Ibid.* (April 21, 1825), p. 123.
[56] *Ibid.*, DLXIX (July 1, 1828), 575–583.
[57] *Ibid.*, p. 575.
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] *Ibid.*, p. 580.
[60] *Ibid.*

was recorded represented the prevailing Orientalist sentiment on Wellesley's institution: those by Henry Shakespear, Andrew Stirling, and William H. Macnaughten.

Henry Shakespear,[61] then Officiating Chief Secretary of the Government, summarized his defense of the college in these words:

> When I look back to the sound and statesmanlike views of the Marquis Wellesley under whose auspices the College was established; When I see around me, in every Department of the service, so many men whose career of Service sheds a lustre on the institution in which they were trained to habits of application, and a knowledge of the languages which are essential to the efficient conduct of the principal officers under the Government, I confess I contemplate the abolition of the College with feelings of deep regret, and strong forebodings that the measure will in the end be productive of serious evils to the best interests of the Country.[62]

Andrew Stirling[63] defended the college for its "greatness as a literary institution" and for the "attainments of its eminent scholars."[64] Though perhaps the college may have been lax with its students recently, he was convinced that it would be a serious error to abolish an institution "affording such great encouragement and facilities to study."[65] He warned that the situation would be much

[61] After graduating from the College of Fort William in 1805, Henry Shakespear entered the judicial service in Eastern Bengal. He was brought back to Calcutta in 1819 as a chief magistrate. In 1821, Shakespear was given the office of Superintendent of the Calcutta Police. In 1823, he was invited to be an original member of H. H. Wilson's General Committee on Public Instruction.

[62] PCFW, DLXX (June 24, 1828), 6.

[63] Andrew Stirling was a scholar at the College of Fort William, winning three 1,000-rupee prizes for his proficiency in Urdu, Persian, and Arabic. Upon graduation in 1814, he was appointed Assistant to the Resident at Delhi. From Delhi he went to Cuttack, Orissa, as the Commissioner's Secretary. Like Brian Hodgson, Stirling devoted much time to archeological digging and collecting of antiquities. He wrote the first history of Orissa, which appeared as an article in the 1825 *Asiatik Researches*. Twelve years later he expanded it in an article for the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*. He was invited to join the Calcutta elite in 1823, when he became Officiating Persian Secretary. In the same year he was also made an original member of the General Committee on Public Instruction. In 1828, when given the College Council post, he served in the Secret and Political Department as Officiating Secretary.

[64] PCFW, DLXX (Summer, 1828), 6–14.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

worse without the college.) There would then be no "restraint on idleness" nor "the prospect of distinction held out as the stimulus and reward of successful application."[66] In short, Stirling was persuaded that "the College of Fort William fully accomplishes one, at least, of the main objects of its establishment, and may fairly claim the merit of producing or perfecting those attainments which shed a lustre on its own character and that of the scholars it contributes to form."[67]

W. H. Macnaughten, perhaps the most distinguished linguist the college ever produced,[68] had spent most of his career until then (1828) in Calcutta, moving from one bureau of state to another.[69] Probably more than any other Council member, Macnaughten was closer to the core of the problem when he noted a difference in quality and attitude between students in his own time and those of the present generation.[70] To him the college, so long as it maintained "Wellesley's ideals," was not to blame for the existing student apathy and indiscipline.[71] Among the students then attending the college, he distinguished three types. The first, which in his time constituted the majority, were currently in the minority. These students were "naturally steady, studious, and disposed to avail themselves of all the means of improvement within their reach."[72] According to Macnaughten, "to these the College . . . affords pure, unmixed advantages."[73] The second type, the troublemakers, "are radically ill disposed and . . . will run their careers of folly in spite of impediments."[74] When he was a student the second group was isolated and inspired no great following. Now, however, it seemed to him that they strongly influenced the third and most numerous type: "the neutral or compound character who evinces no decisive

[66] *Ibid.*

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] W. H. Macnaughten broke all records in linguistic proficiency at the College of Fort William (1814–15), where he collected 7,000 rupees for prizes. For more information see Roebuck, Appendix, p. 58.

[69] McNaughten became the most prominent Persian specialist in the 1820's and supervised the translations of regulations and despatches while also helping to shape foreign policy. He joined the General Committee on Public Instruction in March, 1824, and the College Council in 1825.

[70] PCFW, DLXX (Summer, 1828), 14–20.

[71] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

[72] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[73] *Ibid.*

[74] *Ibid.*

disposition, and with whom no influence is so strong as the example of his associates."[75]

Macnaughten went no further in determining the causes for the apparent change in student values. Like his fellow Orientalists, he expressed great loyalty to Wellesley and to the ideals that had prompted the establishment of the college. Concluding his eloquent appeal, he wrote: "The efficiency of the College of Fort William has been uniformly acknowledged during a long series of years by a succession of able, impartial and eminent men. Of the noble fabrik designed by its illustrous founder there is but a small portion standing—but enough to answer the chief purpose of its foundation."[76]

The Orientalists, who maintained their control in the college, managed to evade Bentinck's executive axe until 1830. In March of that year, Ruddell, Secretary of the College, knowing that Bentinck had already decided for dismemberment, wrote an urgent letter to the governor-general requesting a pension for William Carey,[77] who had given "twenty-nine years of life to the College."[78]

On March 22, 1830, Captain Price, the Hindi professor, wrote the last recorded protest against Bentinck's decision (still unofficial) to suspend the college faculty and to abolish the lecture system. "The new system," he predicted, "would create low proficiency in students."[79] Price maintained:

> This is not an unfounded conjecture but rests upon the long experience I have had in the College in which I have had constant opportunities of observing how much the assistance of the Professor was required for the pupil's advancement; and how rarely he has made the most moderate progress, when he has been removed for a period from the system pursued in the College. It has scarcely ever happened that a Student from the Mufussil has been able to pass the examination until he has again enjoyed for some time the advantages of regular lectures and the personal contact of a Professor.[80]

The official resolution embodying Bentinck's new educational policy was dated May 4, 1830.[81] The Governor-general had re-

[75] *Ibid.*
[76] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[77] *Ibid.*, DLXXI (March 23, 1830), 18–20.
[78] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[79] *Ibid.* (March 22, 1830), pp. 21–24.
[80] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[81] "Resolution of the General Department," quoted *ibid.* (May 4, 1830), pp. 43–45.

solved that "from the first Proximo" the professorships, both European and native, would be abolished and lectures to students discontinued.[82] All members of the regular faculty would receive pensions.[83] The new system provided for a Board of Examiners (Price, Ousley, and Todd) and a kind of floating establishment of native tutors who would be hired by students for private instruction.

In July, 1830, Carey submitted the last of his well-intentioned proposals to the College Council. He first predicted, however, that the new system, without "experienced European tutors and regular lectures," would fail.[84] Then he asked that the Council prevail upon Bentinck to allow his own Serampore College to continue "Fort William's species of instruction."[85] Carey stated that Serampore was prepared to offer "a series of lectures conducted on the same principle which regulated the lectures delivered at Fort William College."[86] Bentinck refused the request in a cool letter to Henry Shakespear more than a month later.[87]

On March 1, 1831, Bentinck dissolved the College Council following Shakespear's angry resignation.[88] The governor-general then dispersed the library so quickly that in 1833 the Board of Examiners was compelled to repurchase some of its own books in order to meet the sudden, critical need by the college for textbooks.[89] Another reason for the book shortage was that Fort William's customary subsidization of Oriental works had ceased two years previously (see Table 7).[90] Most of the valuable college-library collections were gradually absorbed into the Asiatic Society's library.[91] In 1835, the momentous year of the Anglicist victory, Bentinck completed the dismantling of the college structure by closing the dormitory at the Writers' Building,[92] allowing students to live wherever they pleased.[93]

[82] *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] *Ibid.* (July 17, 1830), p. 227.
[85] *Ibid.*, p. 228.
[86] *Ibid.*
[87] *Ibid.* (August 24, 1830), p. 229.
[88] *Ibid.* (March 1, 1831), pp. 464–465.
[89] *Ibid.*, DLXXII (June 17, 1833), 537–538.
[90] *Ibid.*, DLXXI (July 27, 1831), 616.
[91] It should be added that the European collection of the College of Fort William formed the nucleus of the Calcutta Public Library in 1835.
[92] Bentinck rented the rooms to private individuals and business houses. Newton, p. 8.
[93] M. Monier-Williams *et al.*, *Memorials of Old Haileybury College* (London: Archibald Constable and Company, 1894), p. 245.

Thereafter, when Haileybury graduates disembarked at Calcutta expecting to resume their formal education, they discovered a "phantom College."[94] In 1841 Major George T. Marshall, one of the last of the brilliant students in the old college (1830–31), became the secretary of the new college and struggled to reactivate the institution.[95] He succeeded in restoring patronage and in arousing a limited amount of interest among the students. Indeed, the situation seemed promising in 1843 when a student named Seton Karr won the first degree of honor awarded by the college in nine-

Table 7

FORT WILLIAM COLLEGE: ANNUAL EXPENDITURES, AND AMOUNTS SPENT FOR LITERARY PATRONAGE, 1828–1840
(in rupees)

Year	*Aggregate total*	*Literary Patronage*
1828	135,460	5,775
1829	117,884	11,781
1830	82,597	6,611
1831	71,882	0
1832–1835	[no record]	
1836	51,464	0
1837	44,399	0
1838	[no record]	
1839	36,344	0
1840	32,350	0

SOURCE: Compiled from the Proceedings of the College of Fort William, *Home Miscellaneous Series*. Indian National Archives, New Delhi.

[94] William Taylor, who entered the College of Fort William just at the time of its collapse (1830), not only ridiculed his "education" there but joyfully recalled how, after winning a gold medal for his proficiency, he immediately had it melted and converted into a pair of earrings for his lady friend. W. Taylor, *Thirty-Eight Years in India* (London: W. H. Allen and Company, 1881), I, 86.

[95] West Bengal Record Office, Calcutta. General Proceedings of the Governor-General-in-Council, 1834–35, XIII (January 6, 1841), 14–15. Cited hereafter as GPG-G-i-C. See also J. C. Marshman's optimism for these changes in "College of Fort William," *Friend of India*, VIII (June 30, 1842), 403.

teen years.[96] Marshall was also fortunate in being assisted by a gifted Bengali named Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, whom he had discovered among the graduates of Sanskrit College.[97]

With only a small fraction of the original budget at his disposal[98] and without official approval for restoring the college, Marshall was unable to reverse Fort William's prolonged process of decay. In October, 1853, after investigating the condition of the College of Fort William, Governor-general Dalhousie reported that he had found "no College, no buildings, no rooms, no professors, no lectures, but only a few Moonshis whom the Government pays but who have no employment."[99] Three months later, on January 24, 1854, the governor-general officially and completely dissolved the by then nonexistent College of Fort William.[100]

[96] "Fort William College," *Friend of India*, X (February 29, 1844), 130–131.

[97] Marshall recorded his high estimation of Vidyasagar in a letter of January 4, 1841, which is now among the records of Sanskrit College. SC GRC, Letters Received, 1835–1843 (January 4, 1841).

[98] In 1841–1842, the college disbursements totalled a mere 16,069 rupees. PCFW, DLXXIV (n.d.), 566.

[99] GPG-G-i-C, XIII (October 11, 1853), 101.

[100] *Ibid.* (January 24, 1854), p.113.

XIV

Macaulayism and the Defeat of the Orientalists

In 1819, the year that James Mill was hired as Assistant Examiner of Correspondence at the India House,[1] his *History of British India* first became available in Calcutta.[2] Eric Stokes has suggested that the impact of Mill's Utilitarian ideas on British administration in India was profound.[3] Mill's cultural attitudes, which were decidedly in the tradition of Charles Grant and the Evangelicals, had an equally profound effect upon the thinking of the civil servants.

James Mill has the distinction of being the only great English philosopher to have written a serious book on India. Ten years of extensive research and revision passed before he finally published the *History of British India* in 1818.[4] His reputation as an intellectual probably accounted for the book's enormous influence.[5] Only the Orientalists, who felt threatened by his indictment of all Oriental civilizations, questioned his qualifications to write such a history. Mill had never been to India, knew no Indian languages, and

[1] Forster, p. 196.

[2] "Mill's History of British India," *Calcutta Journal*, III (June 20, 1819), 1020–1022.

[3] Stokes, p. 48.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

[5] For a study of Mill's influence as an historian see C. H. Philips (ed.), "James Mill, Mountstuart Elphinstone, and the History of India," *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 217–219.

had relied on secondary sources to support his sweeping generalizations.[6]

With James Mill, who was certainly cut from the same cloth as his Orientalist adversaries, the rationalist heritage of the Enlightenment betrayed itself as a double-edged sword. The same Mill who attacked Voltaire and other *philosophes* for their "silly, sentimental" infatuation with Oriental despotism also felt ill at ease with Macaulay's extreme chauvinism in India. The same Mill who dared to deflate the exalted figure of William Jones also angered Macaulay by denying the utility of English education in Asia.[7]

Mill and Benthamite Utilitarianism were products of the eighteenth-century passion for discovering "natural," "inalienable," and "universal" laws. The hoped-for institution to promote the most happiness for the largest number, which Voltaire perceived in the enlightened despotism of Mandarin China and Rousseau in the legislative instrument of representative democracy, would be discerned by Bentham and Mill in the laws and judiciary structure of government.[8] One important feature probably characteristic of the eighteenth-century intellectual was his philosophical pursuit of the institution or the principle that might transcend cultural frontiers and the apparent diversity of man's historical evolution.

Nevertheless, there were serious differences. Universalism inspired Voltaire, Gibbon, and the Orientalists with a cosmopolitan feeling of mutual tolerance, but the same outlook led James Mill in quite the opposite direction. Perhaps the main point of departure was Mill's obvious aversion to the "primordial" classicism of his contemporaries. As a "progressive" modernist, he was concerned not with recapturing the glories of a bygone age but with reshaping the present to accord with a prospective glorious future.[9] Not only would such a man as Mill refuse to share the melancholy of Gibbon

[6] H. H. Wilson discusses Mill's sources in J. Mill, *History of British India* (4th ed.; London: James Madden and Company, 1840), I, iii–iv.

[7] Eric Stokes argues that Mill was "no Anglicist" and "was convinced that the vernacular languages were far better vehicles of instruction." Stokes, p. 57. See also K. A. Ballhatchet, "The Home Government and Bentinck's Educational Policy," *Cambridge Historical Journal*, X (1951), 224.

[8] Stokes, pp. 66–71.

[9] In this sense, Mill belongs to the optimistic Victorian age. For an excellent discussion of the growing anticlassic dissatisfaction of the English intellectual from Bentham through the Victorians, see W. E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957).

over the decline of Rome's grandeur or Voltaire's admiration of the four "classical" ages of Western man, but for him, all recorded history—compared with the possibilities of social improvement in the present—would appear a dark and unworthy chronicle.

Mill, because of the rising pressure for change in cultural policy at the time he involved himself in Company affairs,[10] and also because of his Utilitarian bent, took the revolutionary step that paved the way for Macaulay. Mill extended the intolerance of Voltaire for the barbaric ages to the "barbaric" cultures in Asia, where he believed darkness had always prevailed. For the very reason that Mill looked more toward the future than toward the past, he developed an antipathy for the Orientalists. In his eyes, the Orientalists, instead of helping to eradicate the blight of Oriental despotism, were guilty of perpetuating it by giving its period the aura of a mythical golden age.

Although this kind of reasoning may help to illuminate the philosophical differences between Mill and the Orientalists, another type of analysis seems necessary to explain why Mill's Utilitarianism proved more attractive than Orientalism to the younger civil servants in India.

The immense popularity of Mill's anti-Asian *History of British India* among generations of civil servants may be explained on one level as a logical outcome of the Cornwallis cultural policy.[11] Warren Hastings and Cornwallis represented two alternative theories on how best to keep the Englishmen in India from turning the clock back to the Clive period of self-imposed exile without the feeling

[10] We should keep in mind the Evangelical victory of 1813 that opened India to missionaries and the growing sense of rational self-importance after Napoleon's defeat by the British.

[11] The Cornwallis era (1786–1793) may be looked upon as a "westernizing" interlude between the birth of Orientalist culture policy under Warren Hastings and the extension of that policy under Wellesley. In all important policy decisions, Cornwallis chose alien solutions to Indian culture problems. Part of the explanation for this anti-Hastings philosophy of administration lies in the fact that he was "the first Governor General to be appointed without any previous experience in India." A. Aspinall, *Cornwallis in Bengal* (Manchester: University of Manchester Press, 1931), p. 7. In an effort to explain which political idea Cornwallis chose to accept as a guiding principle for his institutional innovation in Bengal, Eric Stokes writes: "The Permanent Settlement (1793) was a frank attempt to apply the English Whig philosophy of government." Stokes, p. 5.

of public service.[12] Hastings's idea, as we have seen, was to establish an elite of acculturated Englishmen, whereas Cornwallis believed that the key to successful rule in India was to maintain a purified bureaucratic atmosphere aimed at encouraging impersonal, dedicated, and efficient administrators.[13]

Mill's Utilitarianism, as practiced in India, may be said not only to have revived the Cornwallis theory but to have reinforced it and brought it to its fulfilment in the late nineteenth century. Like Mill, Cornwallis distrusted Oriental despotism[14] and sought legal solutions to sociocultural problems. Unlike Mill, Cornwallis placed his faith in English law, which he unhesitatingly transplanted to Bengal.[15] Stokes points out that Mill criticized the Permanent Settlement for not clearly defining rights and obligations.[16] Nevertheless, both men apparently believed in the efficacy of rational laws operating within a competent legal system.

But the feature most clearly common to the two men was their attitude toward Asians. Though Mill did not argue as a Westernizer, he differed little, in actuality, from Cornwallis in his low esteem of Asians. Mill's condemnation of Oriental peoples, in the following passage from the *History*, seems remarkably similar to the Cornwallis attitude that prompted the Native Exclusion Act of 1791:[17]

[12] Hastings and Cornwallis were almost diametrically opposed on the matter of solving the civil-service problem in India. When preparing to leave Bengal, Cornwallis apparently said that he had anxiously tried "to make everything as English as possible in a country which resembles England in nothing." Quoted in Aspinall, p. 173.

[13] Therefore his "first task was purification." Cornwallis abolished the Board of Trade, raised the salaries of the servants, sought to eliminate "irregularities," and aimed at creating an uncorrupting atmosphere by excluding "Asiaticks" from the higher echelons of administration. Spear, *Oxford History*, pp. 531–534.

[14] According to Stokes, Cornwallis employed the Whig philosophy against this kind of despotism. Behind the Permanent Settlement, for example, Stokes writes, "was the Whig conviction that political power is essentially corrupting and inevitably abused; that power . . . must be reduced . . . and even then kept divided and counterbalanced." Stokes, p. 5.

[15] On Mill's "irreverence" for English law, see *ibid.*, pp. 60–61.

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 61–62.

[17] Spear writes: "Another unfortunate consequence of Cornwallis's measures was the exclusion of Indians from all higher government posts. . . . 'Every native of Hindustan, I verily believe, is corrupt,' he wrote." Spear, *Oxford History*, p. 532.

> Even in manners, and in the leading parts of the moral character, the lines of resemblance (between Indians and Chinese) are strong. Both nations are to nearly an equal degree tainted with the vices of insincerity; dissembling, treacherous, mendacious, to an excess which surpasses even the unusual measure of uncultivated society. Both are disposed to excessive exaggeration with regard to everything related to themselves. Both are cowardly and unfeeling. Both are to the highest degree conceited of themselves, and full of affected contempt for others. Both are in a physical sense, disgustingly unclean in their persons and houses.[18]

It is therefore understandable that Orientalists reacted angrily to Mill's *History* when it appeared in Calcutta. Of the several volumes, it was Mill's dismal view of ancient India in the first that would draw the most fire from irate Orientalists and Indians for decades to come.

Fundamentally, Mill argued, beneath the shining veneer of Brahman achievements lay a primitive and barbaric state of society held together from earliest times by despotism and priestcraft.[19] Being a rationalist and a Benthamite, Mill viewed tyranny—not religion—as the root evil of Hindu culture.[20] The absence of political liberty, natural in a society that condoned extreme caste rigidity and complete license of religious superstition, resulted from the twin tyranny of the despot and Brahman. Mill went so far as to suggest that "despotism and priestcraft taken together, the Hindus, in mind and body, were the most enslaved portion of the human race."[21]

The Orientalists in Calcutta published elaborate rebuttals of Mill's *History* in the local press. On June 20, 1819, for example, the *Calcutta Journal* printed an article signed by a "philo-Hindu" which sought to discredit Mill's work. The author considered Colebrooke a far better authority on the Hindus than Mill,[22] and argued that the evidence for important contributions by the Hindus to mankind was too well-established by linguistically competent scholars to be dismissed in "so trivial a manner."[23] The article expressed puzzlement "that bigotry should exist on such a subject as the Hindus. . . ."[24] Mill had "overlooked what was the duty of the

[18] Mill, II, p. 135.
[19] Mill, I, 222.
[20] *Ibid.*, II, 166–167.
[21] *Ibid.*
[22] "Mill's History," *Calcutta Journal*, III (June 20, 1819), 1020.
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] *Ibid.*

historian in this case" and had taken the side of "the zealots."[25] As an historian, Mill should not "praise the Hindus, or blame the Hindus. [He should instead proceed] by a careful examination of facts, by a laborious collection, and vigilant appreciation of all the evidence . . . by an extensive comparison with the correspondent circumstances of other nations. . . ."[26]

In 1828, William Bentinck—who had been recalled as governor of Madras in 1807 for his inability to prevent the Vellore massacre—came to India as the first governor-general with views openly antithetical to Orientalist cultural policy. If he arrived in Calcutta with a philosophy, it was assuredly derived from the "pure milk of the Benthamite word."[27] Bentinck has been quoted as saying to James Mill, "I am going to British India, but I shall not be Governor-General. It is you that will be Governor-General."[28]

Between 1829 and 1835, the effects of Bentinck's philosophy greatly reduced the dynamism generated by two generations of Orientalist institutional growth and development. Under his administration, the College of Fort William was dismantled, the Asiatic Society experienced grave financial difficulties, the Calcutta Madrassa and Sanscrit College came precariously close to extinction, the Calcutta School and School Book Societies were rendered impotent, Serampore College anglicized its curriculum and lost its attractiveness to Indians, and such Bengali socioreligious reform movements as the *Brahmo Sabha* began their long drift to cultural nationalism. The Bentinck era, which many historians have viewed as an extension of British reformism to India, was rather, when regarded in another light, a highly disruptive, confusing period that was marked by a crisis of identity among the intelligentsia.

In 1834, Charles Trevelyan, an ardent Westernizer, wrote a tract aimed at justifying the "abolition" of the College of Fort William. It proved to be the beginning of what has come to be known as the Orientalist-Anglicist controversy. For Trevelyan, "the rage for Orientalism" began not with Hastings, but with Wellesley.[29]

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] *Ibid.*

[27] Bentinck quoted in Stokes, p. 51.

[28] Bentham to Colonel Young, December 28, 1827, quoted in *ibid.*

[29] C. Trevelyan *et al.*, *A Series of Papers on the Application of the Roman Alphabet to All the Oriental Languages* (Serampore: Mission Press, 1834), p. 16.

Wellesley's object, said Trevelyan, "was to educate Europeans in the languages and cultures of the East."[30] The Anglicists, on the other hand, now hoped "to educate Asiatics in the sciences of the West."[31] If Wellesley and the Orientalists had intended to revitalize Hinduism by means of a college-directed program of indigenous literary and cultural revival, they were misleading themselves as well as others: "Instead of a revival of sound learning it was only a revival of antiquated errors. Our Orientalists fondly imagined that while they were propagating the profligacies of the Sanskrit dramas, they were promoting the cause of public instruction."[32]

Trevelyan accused Wellesley of having done great harm by not keeping the College of Fort William "within proper limits."[33] Its support of Oriental literature "exceeded all bounds and deluged the country with such an innundation . . . as had not been seen since the time of King Bhoj. . . ."[34] Trevelyan ridiculed the Orientalist efforts in the field of social action, believing, like Macaulay, that one could not produce change in a civilization which was already a corpse.[35]

On August 20, 1834, H. H. Wilson, now in England, wrote a letter to his Bengali friend, Ram Camul Sen, refuting the main arguments put forward by Trevelyan and the Anglicist party. Wilson's worst fears about Bentinck's policy of stemming the tide of the Orientalist movement were being realized, and he felt an overwhelming sense of frustration:

> But neither Lord William, nor Mr. Trevelyan know what they are doing. . . . Upon its [Sanskrit's] cultivation depends the means of native dialects to embody European learning and science. It is a visionary absurdity to think of making English the language of India. It should be extensively studied, no doubt, but the improvement of the native dialects enriching them with Sanskrit terms for English ideas, [must be continued] and to effect this, Sanskrit must be cultivated as well as English.[36]

Wilson then described the governor-general as "an ignorant man who has a vigorous mind and quiet observation but who never reads and therefore, often judges wrongly."[37]

[30] *Ibid.*
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] *Ibid.*, p. 17.
[35] *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[36] Wilson to Sen, August 20, 1834, quoted in P. C. Mitra, pp. 16–17.
[37] *Ibid.*

Such sentiments (which Wilson also transmitted to the governor-general himself) not only were ignored in most cases but were openly challenged by that powerful friend of Bentinck whose famous piece of purple prose of February 2, 1835, has become the most frequently quoted Minute in the history of British India. Thomas Babington Macaulay, so well known in the West for his liberalism,[38] nationalism,[39] and historical style,[40] is equally celebrated for his brief sojourn in Calcutta, where he is believed to have single-handedly broken the long deadlock between Orientalist and Anglicist and prepared the way for "freedom and progress" in India.[41]

To those who contend that Westernization is the only true form of modernization,[42] Macaulay's renown is certainly justified. He was a highly articulate representative of the West European liberal intelligentsia whom we generally associate with the British Reform movement of the 1830's and the revolutions of 1848.[43] Macaulay was spokesman for a generation that held certain liberal principles of government and society to be universally valid.[44] His faith in

[38] For a study of Macaulay's liberalism in relation to the liberalism of other Victorians, see Haughton, pp. 27–53.

[39] For Macaulay's nationalism in comparison with the position of other Victorians, see *ibid.*, pp. 196–217.

[40] For a favorable essay on Macaulay's historical style vis-à-vis India, see R. K. Das Gupta, "Macaulay's Writings on India," *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, pp. 230–240.

[41] In the leading book of source readings on India in the United States, Stephen Hay writes on Macaulay's Minute: "His judgment was nevertheless basically well-intentioned, for his purpose was not the eradication of non-Western learning in India, but its regeneration through contact with the best learning produced by the modern West." *Sources of Indian Tradition*, p. 596.

[42] For remarks on the synonymous use of these two concepts, see pp. 277–278.

[43] Their role in the all-European revolutions of 1848 has been brilliantly analyzed in L. Namier, *1848: The Revolution of the Intellectuals* (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1964).

[44] Benedetto Croce summed up these liberal principles rather eloquently when he wrote:

> The liberal method converts all from subjects into citizens, and gives to all, or to as many as possible, the means of sharing power, whether in government and administration, or by criticism and counsel, or through resistance, direct and indirect, by means of its various institutions, freedom of speech and of the Press, and of association, of voting and standing for election, and so forth. Whoso wants to make use of these liberties can do so, inspired thereto by civil education directed to this end, and he can take

greater mass participation in government through representative institutions marked him as the apostle for what Croce has rightly called the nineteenth-century religion of liberalism.[45] There was evidently no doubt in Macaulay's mind that what the intelligentsia valued as progressive or "modern" for the West could and should be exported to India.[46]

Macaulay's belief that Asians could achieve a higher quality of civilization in the manner of Europeans seems to indicate a deep commitment to the cosmopolitan spirit of the eighteenth century. It surely separates Macaulay from the racists of a generation or so later during the rising tide of imperialism.[47] Also, because Macaulay advocated a Westernizing program for India that was secular rather than religious, he seems to have had little in common with his father's generation of Evangelical zealots.

If Macaulay was neither a Kipling nor a Wilberforce but an

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part in the competition and in the political struggle, whose larger or smaller fruits depend upon the quality, more or less good, of the forces in play, and of the men who share in them and handle the method.

See B. Croce, "History and Utopia," *History as the Story of Liberty* (New York: Meridian Books, 1941), p. 254.

[45] See "Religious Piety and Religion," *ibid.*, pp. 244–249. See also chapter on "The Religion of Liberty," in B. Croce, *History of Europe in the Nineteenth Century*. H. Furst (tr.) (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1963), pp. 3–19.

[46] There seems little doubt that to Macaulay's generation in Victorian England, the progressive era in which they lived was radically different from any other previous age in world history and was the beginning of modernity. See Houghton, pp. 27–53. Also, Macaulay explicitly stated in his famous Minute that he believed modernity or the new forces of liberalism could be exported. Thinking of Russia, in particular, Macaulay wrote, "There are in modern times . . . memorable instances of a great impulse given to the mind of a whole society—of prejudice overthrown—of knowledge diffused—of taste purified—of arts and sciences planted in countries which had recently been ignorant and barbarous." Minute of February 2, 1835, found in the GCPI MPC.

[47] Nevertheless, as Houghton demonstrates in his chapter on "The Worship of Force," the love of violence evidenced by Macaulay, Carlyle, and other Victorians did reflect the same kind of spirit as that of the imperialists. But the distance between the two world views was still great. Writes Houghton, "It was British chauvinism . . . which by moments turned men like Kingsley and Froude, Carlyle and Hughes, into storm-troopers and led the British public to buy thirty-one editions of Creasy's *Fifteen Decisive Battles of the World* between 1852 and 1882 at least partly for the reason given by Spencer, in order to 'revel in accounts of slaughter.'" Houghton, p. 211.

ardent liberal champion of modernization for India, how do we explain the conflicting views of him among Asian scholars and other intellectuals?—many of whom seem to share his liberalism. In Indian historiography, the very name Macaulay evokes intense feelings and emotions. Though still praised for such prophecies as "in forty years time there would not be any idolatry among respectable classes of Bengal,"[48] he is condemned for his "major weakness" of "knowing India and Indians very little . . ." which ". . . was due to his colossal ignorance of the rich store of Oriental learning."[49] One extremely negative view, by no means uncommon, is that Macaulay, rather than being a high-principled modernizer, was a Nabob who came to India to assume a position that paid £10,000 a year.[50]

To assess Macaulay's role as Indian modernizer is a very perplexing task, for various reasons. In the first place, twentieth-century man, who has suffered unparalleled dehumanization as a result of aggressive nationalism, imperialism, militarism, "technologism," and totalitarianism, has often reflected on the optimistic, liberal period of the Victorians and pondered as to what went wrong. Secondly, mixed feelings about Macaulay are closely related to scholarly unwillingness, until recently, to acknowledge Orientalist syncretism as a viable alternative to modernization in India. A third significant reason, especially from the viewpoint of Asians themselves, is that Macaulay's role has rarely been analyzed in the psychological perspective of cultural encounter.

A new scrutiny of the Victorian Age might suggest that there were certain aspects of Macaulay's attitude that made him as much a forerunner of the later age of imperialism as other features linked him to universalist tradition of the eighteenth century. The Macaulay whom Walter E. Houghton depicts in his *Victorian Frame of Mind* is an excellent case in point. On the one hand, Macaulay the modernizer took great "pride in the power of man to conquer nature." But on the other hand, as Houghton reminds us, "in Macaulay, pride in the power of man to conquer nature had already passed into pride in the power of Englishmen to subdue the earth, both material and human."[51]

Hans Kohn, an authority on nationalism in the West, places the

[48] N. S. Bose, p. 66.
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] B. D. Basu, pp. 85–88.
[51] Houghton, p. 44.

rise of nationalism "as a general European movement in the nineteenth century," and then refers to Macaulay as a chief participant in the movement.[52] "Nationalism," Kohn writes, "made the divisions of mankind more pronounced and spread the antagonistic aspirations to wider multitudes . . . than ever before." It also produced "cultural tension which invested the national struggles with the halo of a semi-religious crusade."[53] When Macaulay wrote that "the English have become the greatest and most highly civilized people ever the world saw . . . ,"[54] he was evidently expressing a chauvinism (however seemingly true to Victorians) that was in sharp contrast to what Kohn calls "the rationalism of the eighteenth century with its emphasis on the common sense of civilization."[55] This is not to blame Macaulay for having observed rightly in the same essay that

> the English . . . have spread their dominion over every quarter of the globe . . . have created a maritime power which would annihilate in a quarter of an hour the navies of Tyre, Athens, Carthage, Venice, and Genoa together, have carried the science of healing, the means of locomotion and correspondence, every mechanical art, every manufacture, every thing that promotes the convenience of life, to a perfection which our ancestors would have thought magical.[56]

These observations on Macaulay may help to explain why the Anglicist position on cultural change for India appears so arrogantly ethnocentric. They also might well account for the demise of the Orientalist alternative program because of lack of public support. Seen in historical perspective, as already intimated, Orientalists and Anglicists shared the same universalist faith in the capacity of non-Europeans to reach a high level of civilizational achievement. To be sure, Orientalists advocated syncretic schemes for self-help according to one's own value system, whereas Anglicists were less sympathetic to traditional values and more convinced that no real change was possible without radical assimilation to the British style of life. Yet it was precisely the Anglicist argument that the process of modernization was organically related in some mysterious way

[52] H. Kohn, *Prophets and Peoples* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1961), p. 14.
[53] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[54] Macaulay's essay on "Sir James Mackintosh," (1835) quoted in Houghton, p. 39.
[55] Kohn, p. 15.
[56] Houghton, p. 39.

to the British culture pattern that constituted a fundamental difference between the two philosophies. This could also explain how later-day imperialists were able to modify Macaulayism so to justify claims of racial superiority.

From the point of view of the Asians themselves, the controversy about Macaulay may perhaps be best understood in terms of the psychology of encounter. Put simply, it was not so much what Anglicists intended to do or what they actually said that aroused so much indignation among the Europeanized Calcutta intelligentsia, but rather the invidious cultural values implicit in what Anglicists proposed. To understand better this Asian response to Macaulay in the nineteenth century, one has only to turn to a similar reaction by twentieth-century scholars—especially anthropologists—to the inflated self-image of the Victorians. We learn from Ruth Bunzel, for example, that one of the nineteenth-century attitudes that Franz Boas strongly opposed was "the ethnocentric . . . version of cultural evolution—that mankind had evolved in a uniform series of stages from 'savagery' to mid-Victorian England, and that all existing forms of culture were to be evaluated in terms of their similarity or dissimilarity to this most highly evolved culture."[57]

How Bengalis reacted to this view is the subject of the next chapter. At this point, suffice it to say that psychologically Victorian Englishmen like Macaulay expressed a certain offensive crudeness which in retrospect reflected the values they espoused. Some of the adjectives used by Houghton to describe this class of Englishmen should indicate something of their personalities: obstinate, rigid, arrogant, dogmatic, and self-righteous. Macaulay's style of behavior and writing was apparently so obnoxious that even his warmest admirers today must surely wince from embarrassment by his complete lack of tact or sensitivity for the feelings of the very people whom he wished to reach.

An example of this may be found in H. T. Prinsep's reliable account of the circumstances surrounding the "victory" by Macaulay and the Anglicist party. According to Prinsep, Macaulay easily manipulated "the well-intentioned Bentinck" into appointing him president of the General Committee of Public Instruction.[58] When

[57] Introduction to F. Boas, *Anthropology and Modern Life* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1962), p. 9.

[58] H. T. Prinsep's diary, quoted in H. Sharp, *Selections from Educational Records*, Part I, 1781–1839 (Calcutta: Superintendent, Government Printing in India, 1920), p. 132.

given the post, Macaulay, without consulting the other members of the educational body,[59] prepared and transmitted a proposal that "the Bentinck Government would withhold any further grant of public money from institutions . . . conferring instruction in native languages."[60] He went so far as to recommend that Sanskrit College be abolished.[61]

After Bentinck approved the proposal, John Colvin, one of the younger civil servants in the Anglicist faction, became so "elated at the triumph of his party that he could not help boasting of it to the people of [Sanskrit] College."[62] Word of this spread quickly among the Hindu and Muslim elite of Calcutta and the "mind of the public . . . was in a ferment."[63] By February 15, the Calcutta intelligentsia had circulated petitions against the secret Macaulay Minute of February 2, "signed by no less than 10,000 people."[64]

Only then did the actual debate between Orientalists and Anglicists begin in the educational committee. According to Prinsép, the immediate public reaction to the Macaulay resolution saved Sanskrit College from total abolition. Bentinck, however, remained as unmoved in 1835 about what Orientals desired as he had in 1807. On March 7, 1835, he embodied the main principle of Macaulay's Minute in an official resolution which stated: "His Lordship in Council is of opinion that the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science amongst the natives of India and that *all* the funds appropriated for the purposes of education would be best employed on English education alone."[65]

Macaulay's Minute, which served as the basis for the Bentinck resolution, clearly indicates why Macaulay continues to be such a controversial figure in Indian historiography and why his program for modernizing India, sound as it is from a Westernizer's standpoint, continues to be coolly treated by Asians. Macaulay began his Minute by ridiculing the Indian vernaculars as "poor and rude."[66] Besides putting South Asians themselves on the defensive

[59] *Ibid.*, p. 133.
[60] *Ibid.*
[61] *Ibid.*
[62] *Ibid.*, p. 134.
[63] *Ibid.*
[64] *Ibid.*
[65] Resolution on Education (March 7, 1835), found in the GCPI MPC.
[66] Minute of February 2, 1835, found in *ibid.*

with such a remark, Macaulay angered the Orientalists, who had devoted well over thirty years of hard work to modernizing Indian languages at such institutions as the College of Fort William.

Oriental classical languages seemed especially inferior to Macaulay since "a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia."[67] This statement is an excellent example of how Macaulay obscured his real intention and confused the reader with an invidious comparison between cultures that was highly imperialistic in tone. It is precisely in this context that one Indian writer after another has returned to the charge, emphasizing that such sweeping generalizations were freely articulated by a man who had never read a single line in any Asian language. In all fairness to Macaulay, what he probably meant was that in comparison with the impressive accomplishments of modern European literature, the literary and linguistic achievements of each and every classical civilization were, in his opinion, trivial. Macaulay, the Victorian modernist with an unshakeable faith in the idea of progress, showed the same contempt for his own Western heritage as he did for Oriental ones. The following passage in his *Essay on Bacon* might suggest the relationship between his scathing judgments of other cultures and those passed upon his own tradition: "Words, and more words, and nothing but words, had been all the fruit of all the most renowned sages of sixty generations."[68]

Therefore, and the point cannot be overemphasized, it was Macaulay's outspoken expression of his values, in a tone of dogmatic certainty, that created so much misunderstanding. In paragraph after paragraph, Macaulay gave the reader the impression that he had rejected the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment in favor of the aggressive nationalism of a later period. Actually he had abandoned the past for the glorious future and saw England as embodying the spirit of the new age. Unless we understand that Macaulay used invidious cultural comparisons as a means to the end of Westernizing India, we can easily be misled into believing that he intended to demonstrate the inferiority of non-European peoples and cultures. Take, for example, another of the oft-quoted passages in the Minute:

> It is I believe no exaggeration to say, that all the historical information which has been collected to form all the books written in

[67] *Ibid.*

[68] Macaulay's *Critical Essays*, III, 436–437, quoted in Houghton, p. 123.

> the Sanskrit language is less valuable than that what may be found in the most paltry abridgements used at preparatory schools in England. In every branch of physical or social philosophy, the relative position of the nations is nearly the same.[69]

Another perplexing source of confusion lay in Macaulay's excessive pride in the English language and literature. "It may safely be said," Macaulay noted casually, "that the literature now extant in that language is of far greater value than all the literature which three hundred years ago was extant in all the languages of the world together."[70] We might surmise that in this case Macaulay's display of cultural immodesty probably offended Frenchmen and Italians as well as Asians.

Macaulay concluded that he did not believe that the General Committee on Public Instruction should feel "fettered by the Act of Parliament of 1813" or any "pledge expressed or implied therein."[71] Available funds ought to be utilized "in teaching what is best worth knowing."[72] He was convinced that, since the "natives are desirous to be taught English" and since the government was now anxious that they learn it, support for the indigenous languages should cease.[73] Macaulay therefore recommended that "our efforts ought to be directed . . . to make natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars."[74]

Weeks later, on March 24, W. H. Macnaughten sent a vigorous reply to Bentinck on behalf of the Orientalists. He began by questioning the qualifications of the men who were responsible for the resolution. "I have heard gentlemen," he wrote, "who confessing without any pretentions to Oriental erudition, are in the habit of declaring their belief that the cherished Literature of one hundred millions of people is an unmixed mess of falsehood and absurdity."[75] He viewed the Anglicists as dangerous Utopians. For him, "the notion that the English Language would ever become the Language of India is purely chimerical:"[76]

> If we wish to enlighten the great mass of the people of India we must use as our Instruments the Languages of India. . . . Our object

[69] Minute of February 2, 1835, found in the GCPI MPC.
[70] *Ibid.*
[71] *Ibid.*
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] *Ibid.*
[74] *Ibid.*
[75] W. H. Macnaughten, Minute (March 24, 1835), *ibid.*
[76] *Ibid.*

> is to impart ideas, not words, and it must be much more easy to acquire these through the medium of the mother tongue than by a foreign one. They who assert that the Oriental Languages are incapable of being made the medium to conveying new Ideas must have but a superficial knowledge of those tongues.[77]

Macnaughten, in his attempt to refute every Anglicist contention, even went so far as to question the success of English education in Britain. "We expect so much from Indians," he wrote, "but how many in our country after receiving a most liberal education enter public life with more knowledge than suffices to enable them to use their mother tongue with facility and precision."[78] Yet the Anglicists expected the Indian people no only to master a foreign language ("the most difficult perhaps in the World"), but also to adopt its arts and sciences.[79] In answer to Macaulay's observation that Indians themselves desired to learn English, Macnaughten replied that it was the "love of lucre" that prompted this attraction to English.[80] He predicted that the Indians would resist the resolution[81] and that in time the government would realize how "useless, wasteful and cruel it was to force a people to consume their valuable time in the acquisition of that which is not in itself knowledge, but only the means of gaining knowledge and which provided but a few of them with the means of gaining subsistence."[82]

Although the popular-culture Orientalists did not really figure in the Anglicist-Orientalist controversy, their opposition to Macaulayism was well aired in the Calcutta press. William Carey, the missionary who had dedicated his life to the cultivation of India's popular languages and who might have led the struggle, had died on June 9, 1834. The man who stood in Carey's place to controvert Macaulayism was Carey's brilliant student at Fort William, Brian Hodgson, Resident in Nepal.

In 1835 Brian Hodgson already anticipated the cultural imperialism that the Macaulay program would engender. In a series of letters to *The Friend of India*, he advocated a middle way between the Anglicists and the high-culture Orientalists. Like the Serampore missionaries, he advocated a popular-education program

[77] *Ibid.*
[78] *Ibid.*
[79] *Ibid.*
[80] *Ibid.*
[81] *Ibid.*
[82] *Ibid.*

through the vernaculars. He predicted that "Macaulayism . . . will help to widen the existing lamentable gulf that divides us from the mass of people."[83] Although he shared the Orientalist value system, he condemned the tendency of its general policy to favor the elite and neglect the masses.[84] Hodgson's own idea of renaissance represented a democratic form of Orientalism now almost forgotten:

> We seek to regenerate India; and to lay the foundations of a social system which time and God's blessing on the labours of the founders shall mature perhaps long after we are no longer forthcoming on the scene. Let then the foundation be broad and solid enough to support the vast superstructure. Let us begin in the right way, or fifty years hence we may have to retrace our steps, and commence anew! Sound knowledge generally diffused is the greatest of all blessings; but the soundness of knowledge has ever depended and ever will on its free, and equal, and large communication.[85]

[83] B. Hodgson, *Preeminence of the Vernaculars or The Anglicists Answered*, Vol. XXX of *Serampore College Pamphlet Collection* (4th ed.; Serampore: Serampore Mission Press, 1847), p. 4.

[84] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

XV

Macaulayism and the Bengali Intelligentsia: The Seeds of Ambivalence and the Beginnings of Indian Nationalism

Although the overwhelming majority of the new intelligentsia in nineteenth-century Bengal sought to reinterpret some phase of their past history as a guide to an uncertain future, a small minority of intellectuals denied the validity of their entire cultural heritage. From Derozio to M. N. Roy, there has been a highly articulate intellectual tradition of extreme Westernization and accompanying cultural alienation. Originally nurtured by Derozio at Hindu College during his brief but influential tenure as instructor of English literature between 1828 and 1831, the group representing this tradition, often known as Young Bengal, devised a new solution to the problem of revitalizing Indian culture. Though most of them eventually returned to the indigenous cultural fold, a small number either espoused Christianity and adopted the European Reformation as their model for regeneration or remained faithful to Derozio's secular spirit and promoted the new idea of man's perfectibility or progress in a hopeful future.

To say that Derozio had a key role in originating a secular wing of the intellectual elite is not as exaggerated as it may seem. On the contrary, the popular impression that a new era opened at Hindu College with Derozio's appointment there seems to be confirmed by historical fact. In the eleven years that preceded 1828, Hindu College had not produced a single known graduate who completely

rejected his own culture and sought to identify himself with the alien West.

Hindu College, as we have already seen, was the creation of the newly urbanized Bengali elite in Calcutta, who desired a Westernized institution of higher learning for their sons.[1] Because the college had been established during Marquess Hastings's administration, when Orientalism was first being expressed in programs for social action, there was not the slightest apprehension among the elite that that institution would alienate their children from their own culture.[2]

Why Derozio, one of a number of faculty members, was able to capture completely the imagination of his students is difficult to determine. The fact that he was born a Eurasian with a Portuguese father and that he probably did not know Bengali indicates something of his own cultural background. In 1843, twelve years after his death, he was described in a literary journal in the following manner:

> In his dress, he went to the extreme of foppery. He was like a woman fond of gold and his person was adorned with a goodly quantity of it. He never wore a hat and his hair was parted from the middle. He was conspicuous for his yellow-painted Stanhope and English horse, and it was laughable to see him in the morning, spurred and booted to the knee, on a powerful Arab, coursing the plain. The effect of his dress was increased by his diminutive stature. . . .[3]

Derozio was committed to alien ideas and movements no less intellectually than he was socially and culturally. From his early years at Dharmatola Academy until his death, he seemed to concern himself solely with David Hare's religious scepticism, Diderot's rationalism, and Rousseau's democratic faith.[4] Rammohun Roy shared Derozio's concern with the fate of popular sovereignty in Europe, but he did not or could not share Derozio's complete lack of interest in reinterpreting the Indian tradition. It is not without significance that in the later historiography of Indian nationalism,

[1] *Supra*, pp. 179–182.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] "Henry Louis Vivian Derozio," *Oriental Magazine*, I (October, 1843), 381.

[4] For a recent biography in Bengali that traces these influences on Derozio from a sympathetic point of view, see B. Ghose, *Bidrohi Dirojio* (Kalikātā: Bāk-Sāhitya, 1961).

whereas Rammohun's ambivalence toward the West has earned him the characterization of "Father of Modern India," Derozio, far more Westernized, has increasingly been treated as a denationalizer of Hindu youth.[5]

Yet it was precisely in this legacy of an expatriate mentality to the younger generation of the intelligentsia that Derozio made his contribution to the idea of renaissance. He shared with Macaulay and the Orientalists the same faith in the eighteenth-century ideal of universality. As this study attempts to demonstrate, almost every component of renaissance thought in early nineteenth-century Bengal was predicated on this cosmopolitan belief. Whether it be William Jones linking Europe and Asia through a common linguistic source, or the Serampore missionaries de-Westernizing their Reformation model to accommodate all Asians, or Rammohun Roy arguing for the universality of the monotheistic tradition, or Mrtyunjay arguing the same for the validity of so-called "medieval" tradition, each position rested on a common cosmopolitan base.

Derozio also developed a cosmopolitan view of Indian renaissance that was spiritually akin to Condorcet's unswerving faith in the universal rhythm of historical progress. Derozio, who died a victim of cholera at twenty-two after a brief decade of meager literary activity, has left us nothing to suggest Byronic cynicism or post-Napoleonic nationalism. Instead, he held steadfastly to his faith in the eighteenth-century prophetic concept of man's perfectibility:

> But man's eternal energies can make
> An atmosphere around him, and so take
> Good out of evil, like the yellow bee
> That sucks from flowers malignant a sweet treasure,
> O tyrant fate! Thus shall I vanquish thee,
> For out of suffering shall I gather pleasure.[6]

It is, therefore, understandable why the Eurasian Derozio, who perhaps overidentified with the West in his dress, personal habits, and even thought, was the same Derozio who celebrated India in his poetry to such an extent that at least one American historian of

[5] Nationalism probably explains this phenomenon. Derozio has been praised for his modernizing and enlightening activities in Hindu College but censured for aping the Englishman.

[6] Derozio quoted in S. K. R. Iyenegar, *Indian Contributions to English Literature* (Bombay: Karnatak Publishing House, 1945), p. 13.

India has read into it "the first expression of . . . Indian nationalism."[7] Expressive of more than nationalism, however, a poem like "The Harp of India"—if we were not certain who wrote it, and if it were written in a pedantic, Sanskritized Bengali—might have been an invocation to a renascent India:

> Why hang'st thou lonely on yon withered bough?
> Unstrung, forever, must thou there remain?
> Thy music once was sweet—who hears it now?
> Why doth the breeze sigh over thee in vain?
> Silence hath bound thee with her fatal chain;
> Neglected, mute and desolate art thou
> Like ruined monument on desert plain—
> O! many a hand more worthy far than mine
> Once thy harmonious chords to sweetness gave,
> And many a wreath for them did Fame entwine
> Of flowers still blooming on the minstrel's grave;
> Those hands are cold—but if thy notes divine
> May be by mortal wakened once again,
> Harp of my country let me strike the strain![8]

Such poems, though they may seem flattering to India's remote past, apparently did not reflect Derozio's deepest convictions. He was most assuredly not a Radhakant Deb nor a Rammohun Roy.

In the light of other poems by Derozio, it is more likely that his quest for a golden age or model was not projected backward into India's past but forward into her future. The way to revitalize India was not to revere a period of her past or her institutions that were already dead, but to open Indian minds to the cultural offerings of the West so that India might once more share the benefits of human progress. Derozio never defined his hoped-for golden age but, as is reflected in the following sonnet, he felt a deterministic optimism that the students he trained would help direct India's course toward the secular millennium:

> Your hand is on the helm—guide on young men
> The bark that's freighted with your country's doom.
> Your glories are but budding; they shall bloom

[7] Stephen Hay writes: "His [Derozio's] poems to India are virtually the first expressions of Indian nationalist thought, and their appearance among other poetry whose inspiration is clearly derivative dramatize[s] the fact that modern nationalism is essentially an alien importation into the Indian world of ideas." *Sources of Indian Tradition*, p. 566.

[8] Derozio quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 570–571.

Like fabled amaranths Elysian, when
The shore is won, even now within your ken,
And when your torch shall dissipate the gloom
That long has made your country but a tomb,
Or worse than tomb, the priest's, the tyrant's den.
Guide on, young men, your course is well begun;
Hearts that are tuned to holiest harmony
With all that e'en in thought is good, must be
Best formed for deeds like those which shall be done
By you hereafter till your guerdon's bow
And that which now is hope becomes reality.[9]

The significant fact, often overlooked however, is that the sociocultural differences between Derozio and Young Bengal made it as easy for him to accommodate to such an intellectual position as it made it difficult for them to do likewise. The historical overemphasis on Young Bengal's adolescent fervor in the early 1830's, which coincided with the Bentinck period and the *sati* controversy, has distorted that group's impact on Indian cultural history. Only recently, when scholars have shifted to Young Bengal's mature years, their research has focused on a different kind of intelligentsia, one cultivating Bengali at the expense of English and struggling desperately to return to the cultural fold, but without losing its belief in modernization.[10]

Unlike Derozio, Young Bengal's background was high-caste Hindu, usually one generation removed from the village and nurtured in Calcutta joint families surrounded by tightly knit Bengali neighbors. Whereas Derozio received his secondary-school education in the pragmatic eighteenth-century academy which taught English, reading, writing, and reckoning,[11] Young Bengal was educated in traditional *patsalas* revitalized by Radhakant Deb and David Hare under the Calcutta School Society.[12] Since the reformed schools of the Calcutta Society constituted one of the Orientalist

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 570.

[10] S. K. Sarkar, arguing from a Westernizer position, resolves the problem in the following way: "it is wrong to say that this generation were Anglicized Indians . . . its most memorable positive aspects were a fearless nationalism and a candid appreciation of the regenerating new thought from the West." S. C. Sarkar, "Derozio and Young Bengal," *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*, pp. 29–30.

[11] For a good description of such schools, see K. N. Dhar, "Old Calcutta: Its Schoolmasters," *Calcutta Review*, CXXXIV (July, 1913), 346.

[12] *Supra*, pp. 160–162.

experiments in syncretic education, all of the ingredients of contemporary English learning were integrated into the curriculum. When these Bengali students later went on to Hindu College, therefore, it was not Westernization that Derozio introduced them to, but the Macaulay-type polarity between the superior West and their own tradition.

What Derozio actually imparted to his students was not so much the components of modernity as the cultural components representing a Western style of life. Was modernity or Westernization the basis of the oft-cited assertion that instead of the sacred *mantras* the Derozians now recited from the *Iliad*?[13] In a dozen books and articles, a rather dubious form of modernization is implied when the authors proudly recall that the Derozians, like Englishmen, ate beef and drank wine.[14] The pathetic absurdity of confusing cultural trappings with modernization is apparent in the following contemptuous definition of the Anglicized Bengali which appeared in a Calcutta periodical of 1851: "He has a smattering of English . . . is ultra fashionable in dress and unceremoniously drags poor Shakespeare and Milton from their repose and misquotes the most familiar passages . . . sensual delights are the goddesses of his idolatry. He eats beef, cracks a whole bottle of cognac at Spence's or Wilson's."[15]

It is precisely this kind of unfortunate creature, who increasingly turned to alcoholism to escape his cultural no-man's-land,[16] that frightened the older intelligentsia and made them violent critics of Derozio, Bentinck, and Macaulay. As a result, one of the chief reasons for taking the extraordinary action of dismissing Derozio was that, for the first time in the history of Hindu College, irate parents were withdrawing their children from the institution.[17]

Many letters from such angry parents were published in the so-called "conservative" Bengali newspaper, the *Samāchār chandrikā*, in 1830–31. One letter that appeared in May, 1831 (the month Derozio was fired) probably contained the most representative list of grievances by the Calcutta families who withdrew their sons from Hindu College. According to the father, his son, who "was a

[13] S. C. Sarkar, p. 39.

[14] N. S. Bose, p. 17.

[15] Quoted in M. M. Mukhopadhyay, "Young Bengal and Translation Work," *Calcutta Review*, Vol. X of new series (June, 1924), 526.

[16] Intemperance was apparently a serious problem among Anglicized Bengalis later in the century. See N. S. Rose, p. 142.

[17] See a discussion of this in B. Ghose, *Dirojio*, pp. 62–78.

good boy before", now "has his hair cut"; wears "European shoes"; eats food as soon as he receives it and "without bathing."[18] The boy's "Bengali is unintelligible"; he knows "nothing of ready reckoning" or how to write "bazaar bills."[19] His son "can tell any river or mountain in Russia, but can give no account of his own country."[20] Furthermore, his son has lost all respect for caste practices and calls "holy brahmins and pundits thieves, hypocrites and fools."[21] And what seemed the worst blow of all, his son no longer "wishes to sit with me because I have no great knowledge of English."[22]

Derozio's untimely death in December, 1831, accounts for the rapidity with which he came to be portrayed as a sacrificial victim of the revulsion against modernization in India.[23] Nevertheless, the Bengali managers of Hindu College who voted for his dismissal—men such as Radhakant Deb and Ram Camul Sen—who also were modernists, have been portrayed as his bigoted tormentors.[24] In reality, as should be increasingly evident, it was not academic freedom that was at stake here but rather the psychological need to maintain one's cultural integrity. Derozio was indicted, then, for the disastrous effect of his "skepticism," which was allegedly alienating Hindu youth from their own culture.[25]

It was Alexander Duff, the militant Scottish Calvinist, who frightened the Bengali intelligentsia far more than had Derozio's teaching, because of his activities in Calcutta after 1830. Duff had even less appreciation for what Derozio represented than did the Bengali managers of Hindu College. In May, 1830, he founded the General Assembly's Institution, the nucleus for the later Scottish

[18] Article in *Samāchār Chandrikā* reprinted in "Asiatic Intelligence," *New Asiatic Journal*, II (August, 1831), 195.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] On January 5, 1832, Derozio's disciples erected a monument for him and dedicated themselves to preserve his memory and beliefs. B. Ghose, *Dirojio*, p. 142.

[24] Traditionally, Derozio is regarded as an Indian Socrates who was condemned for his commitment to truth. The impression is that he died a victim of bigotry. The evidence of Derozio's intellectual and moral integrity is a letter he wrote to H. H. Wilson protesting his dismissal and defending his "skepticism." The letter may be found in *Sources of Indian Tradition*, pp. 567–569.

[25] A complete list of the charges against Derozio and the reasons the managers voted as they did may be found in B. Ghose, *Dirojio*, pp. 67–74.

Church College (which was to become one of the important institutions of higher learning in nineteenth-century Calcutta).[26] His purpose from the beginning in this endeavor was to direct the minds of the young Bengali intellectuals away from Derozio's rational skepticism and "atheism" and bring them into the blessed realm of Christian culture, which Duff believed to be the mainspring of Western civilization.[27]

Duff was Macaulay's religious counterpart and very much in the tradition of Charles Grant and the Clapham Sect. Like Macaulay, he violently attacked Oricntal languages while praising the usefulness of English—though he did so as an advocate not of British nationalism but of evangelization. Duff's *magnum opus*, *India and Indian Missions*, ranks with Macaulay's *Minute*, Mill's *History* and Grant's *Observations* as one of the most effective and highly publicized indictments of Hinduism.[28] Probably no other missionary before or since aroused such organized opposition on the part of Calcutta elite as did Duff. His goal, which seemed to fascinate him to the point of obsession, was to convert the entire city of Calcutta, whose population of 2,000,000 was twice that of his native Scotland.[29]

What Duff represented in the history of mission activity can best be appreciated by contrasting his cultural attitude with that of his predecessors in Bengal, the Serampore missionaries. Certainly, what Duff was to the Anglicists, William Carey had been to the Orientalists. Whereas Duff promoted evangelization by accentuating the polarity between East and West, Carey promoted it through the reconciliation of apparent differences. Duff aimed at transforming Calcutta Bengalis into Scottish Presbyterians, but Carey aimed at introducing the basic principles of Christianity into the existing structure of Hindu society. The inflexible Duff, who, in despair and frustration, eventually left Calcutta bemoaning his inability to Westernize it,[30] ought to be contrasted with the flexible Carey,

[26] J. Long, *Hand-Book of Bengal Missions* (London: John Farquehar Shaw, 1848), p. 480.

[27] See G. Smith, *Life of Alexander Duff* (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1879), I, 111; and C. F. Andrews, *Renaissance in India: Its Missionary Aspect* (London: Church Missionary Society, 1912), p. 32.

[28] A. Duff, *India and India Missions* (Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1839).

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 432.

[30] Dilip Kumar Biswas, a noted scholar of the *Brahmo* movement in Bengal, has viewed Duff's departure from Calcutta in 1863 as an acknowledgement of defeat. D. K. Biswas, "Maharshi Debendranath Tagore and Tattvabodhini Sabha," *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*, p. 41.

who—as has been shown in earlier chapters—made India his home.[31]

The Serampore missionaries published works in every Indian language and made important contributions in modernizing the popular languages of South Asia. Duff never wrote in any language but English. Serampore printed the first Bengali newspaper, the *Samāchār darpan*, (which was supported by the local indigenous elite) as well as an English quarterly called *Friend of India*. Duff's paper, the *Calcutta Christian Observer*, which he began to publish in 1832, was in English and far more polemical than any of the more-objective journalistic ventures emanating from the Serampore Mission Press.

But it was probably in the field of education as a tool for cultural change that the contrast between Duff and the Serampore missionaries was sharpest. Duff's Scottish Church College with its totally Westernized curriculum represented the Anglicist value system designed to eradicate the false learning of the East and supplant it with the model of superior Christian learning of the West.[32] In contrast, Serampore College, at least until Carey's death in 1834, was founded on a value system that was clearly Orientalist in educational philosophy.[33]

It is understandable, therefore, why the Bengali elite feared Duff as they did Derozio and Bentinck. Derozio's death favored Duff, since many of the leaderless adolescents at Hindu College found assurance in the latter's dogma of the Calvinist God. Krishna Mohan

[31] *Supra*, pp. 79–80.

[32] For curriculum offerings and textbooks, see Long, p. 48.

[33] In 1821, William Ward's defense of Serampore College was also very much a defense of the Orientalist value system:

> This institution . . . belongs to a system upon which we have been attempting to act for a number of years; that is, to make India evangelize itself and all the surrounding regions. As a part of this system, we have carefully avoided everything which might Anglicize the converts. We have made no changes in their dress, their names, their food, their language, or their domestic habits. Krishna who was baptized more than twenty years ago, appears among his countrymen as much a Hindoo as ever those things contrary to Christianity excepted. If we had given the converts English names and the English dress and appearance, the idolators would have triumphed. . . .
>
> And thus, in this College also, all that is good is Hindoo science, will be retained; native professors for the Eastern languages appointed, and European science engrafted upon the talents, the acquirements, and energies of the natives.

W. Ward, *Farewell Letters to a Few Friends* (New York: E. Bliss & E. Whitey, 1821), pp. 166–167.

Bannerji, a Hindu College student who had idolized Derozio while he lived, suddenly declared the bankruptcy of secular rationalism and underwent a spiritual crisis.[34] In the following passage, written just after his conversion to Christianity in October, 1832, Bannerji clearly revealed the influence of Duff's formula on how the West might best regenerate India:

> Does not history testify that Luther, alone and unsupported blew a blast that shook the mansions of error and prejudice? Did not Knox, opposed as he was to bigots and fanatics, carry the cause of reformation into Scotland? Blessed are we that are to reform the Hindu nation. We have blown the trumpet, and we must continue to blow on. We have attacked Hinduism and will persevere in attacking it until we seal our triumph. . . .[35]

Shortly before Duff baptized Bannerji, Mohesh Chandra Ghose, another Derozian, confessed to the Scottish missionary that "My soul is pierced thoroughly with horrible reflections and terrible alarms; it seems as if racked and rent to pieces."[36]

He, too, was baptized by Duff, on August 28, 1832.[37] Then followed Gopinath Nundi, who under Derozio's teaching scorned all religions. Now only Hinduism seemed false to Gopinath. One day he stormed into Duff's study and with tears in his eyes cried, "Can I be saved? Can I be saved?" Bannerji was called for and the two former Derozians prayed together. Gopinath was subsequently converted.[38]

These experiences seem to suggest that, at least in Bengal, the spiritual form of Westernization proved psychologically satisfying to an intelligentsia beset by the self-torment of cultural ambiguity. It is interesting to speculate whether Macaulay and other secular Anglicists could ever have anticipated that the Westernized intelligentsia would ultimately repudiate the rationalist spirit and return to religious values. Evidently, it was the Anglicist emphasis on the need to assimilate completely to an alien culture that brought about the dilemma. In the first place, the Macaulay-type Westernizer seemed to underestimate the function of cultural traditions—his own as well as others—and was inclined to view traditions as

[34] Smith, *Duff*, p. 155.
[35] Article from *Enquirer* quoted in *ibid.*
[36] *Ibid.*, p. 160.
[37] A report of the conversion was published in the *Enquirer*. See *ibid.*, p. 158.
[38] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

useless survivals of antiquity that had no *raison d'être* in modern society. Quite to the contrary, in fact, the connecting series of cultural traits in nineteenth-century Bengal served not as useless, fossilized traditions, but as the means for maintaining a particular moral and social stability. Therefore, when the Bengali intellectual severed the ties between himself and his heritage, he underwent an identity crisis. In existential terms, this shift in his commitment from the Indian heritage to British culture, without a physical shift from India to England, could only have disastrous psychological repercussions. In effect, the Anglicized intellectual, having acquired alien emotional and intellectual traits, was estranged from his own cultural milieu. It is not to be wondered at, then, that fifty Bengali intellectuals offered themselves to Duff for baptism,[39] and that most of the other members of Young Bengal who decided that they wished to maintain their identity as Hindus joined Debendranath Tagore in 1842 to revitalize the *Brahmo Samaj*.[40]

In 1828, while many of the young students of Hindu College, like Derozio, were ridiculing Hindu customs and manners, Kashi Prasad Ghose, the most brilliant man in his class, launched an attack in the opposite direction on James Mill's *History of British India* that preceded H. H. Wilson's widely publicized refutation by eleven years.[41] The twenty-two-year-old Ghose read his essay condemning Mill at the annual Hindu College examination. Like Wilson, Ghose was most disturbed by Mill's indictment of the ancient Hindu polity. Ghose perceived in the remote Hindu past no barbaric society held together by despotism.[42] The power of a Hindu king was never absolute; he was "restrained by the people and the law."[43] For Ghose, "The monarchs of Hindustan . . . were . . . to be mild and observant of the law. The allurement of wealth and power on one side, and the terror of religion and law on the

[39] P. Fallon, "Christianity in Bengal," *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*, p. 456.

[40] For a description of Debendranath Tagore's organization as champion of Hinduism, see Biswas, *Studies in the Bengal Renaissance*, pp. 40–42.

[41] See H. H. Wilson's notes and commentary in Mill, I.

[42] Mill wrote: "No idea of any system of rule, different from the will of a single person, appears to have entered the minds of them, or their legislators." *Ibid.*, p. 202.

[43] C. Ghose, "Essay on Mill's British India," *Calcutta Gazette*, February 14, 1828, quoted in *Days of John Company*, p. 242.

other, secured the peace of the kingdom."[44] He also defended the ancient Brahmans against Mill's charge that they were a "tyrannical priestly caste."[45] The privileged position assigned to them by society resulted not from their esoteric priestcraft but from their reputation for being learned.[46] So that they might be uncorrupted in their pursuit of knowledge, they were wisely prohibited from acquiring wealth.[47]

Ghose defended the Hindu chronological scheme as being meant for astronomical calculations, not for historical purposes.[48] He also refuted Mill's charge that the Hindus were a "rude and credulous people"[49] by pointing proudly to their achievements in the sciences, the arts, law, and government.[50] Ghose's essay is important historically because he was the first known Bengali intellectual to defend a secular concept of a golden age among the Hindus. His arguments and evidence clearly derived from the work of the Calcutta Orientalists.

On January 7, 1829, H. H. Wilson proposed that members of the Bengali intelligentsia be admitted to membership in the Asiatic Society.[51] Among the first group welcomed into the Orientalist institution were Ram Camul Sen, Russamoy Dutt, Prasanna Kumar Tagore, and Dwarkanath Tagore.[52] It was not until December of 1832 that Radhakant Deb was invited to become a member.[53] On December 12, 1833, almost a year later, Ram Camul Sen reviewed his "29 years with the Society" in a letter of acceptance of the post of native secretary.[54] It is noteworthy that, while Bengalis were withdrawing support from many societies identified with the government, they accepted membership invitations from the Asiatic Society and infused this key Orientalist institution with new blood. Moreover, Wilson appointed Sen to his new post a week before the special meeting announcing his own departure for England.

[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 292–29.
[45] Mill, I, 222.
[46] C. Ghose, "Essay," quoted in *Days of John Company*, p. 291.
[47] *Ibid.*
[48] *Ibid.*, p. 289.
[49] See Mill's attack on Hindu chronology and mythology in his *History*, pp. 155–167.
[50] C. Ghose, "Essay," quoted in *Days of John Company*, p. 288.
[51] LASB MP, IV (January 7, 1829), 68.
[52] *Ibid.* (July 1, 1829), pp. 82–83.
[53] *Ibid.* (December 12, 1833), p. 144.
[54] *Ibid.*

At this special meeting (December 19, 1833), the Society's president, Sir Edward Ryan, reviewed the achievements of the Orientalists from Jones to Wilson. He regarded the rediscovery of the ancient learning of India as a miracle.[55] To him, the Orientalists had been the prime movers in restoring to the world this classical culture that was slowly emerging "from the obscurity which had for ages encompassed it."[56] The Society was particularly indebted to "the ardent enquiring mind of our illustrious founder," to "the profound erudition of Colebrooke," and to the "philological diligence of Wilkins."[57] But the Orientalists had made perhaps their greatest contribution in transforming that "intricate labyrinth of Indian mythology and chronology into an authentic historical tradition."[58] It was in the field of history, Ryan believed, that H. H. Wilson had done his best work: "You have discovered where order could be deduced from the chaos of existing materials, where conclusions satisfactory to sound historical criticism could be attained, from which . . . the future investigator might safely proceed in exploring what is elsewhere most doubtful in this most undiscovered region of Asiatic antiquity."[59]

In 1837, four years after Wilson's departure, James Prinsep,[60]

[55] *Ibid.* (December 19, 1833), p. 150.
[56] *Ibid.*
[57] *Ibid.*
[58] *Ibid.*
[59] *Ibid.*

[60] James Prinsep was born in 1799, the seventh son of John Prinsep, who had served under Warren Hastings in the 1790's. At fifteen, James had thought of becoming an architect, but he developed an eye disease that forced him to give up this idea. His father arranged his apprenticeship to the assay master at the Royal Mint in London and in 1819 Prinsep received his qualifying certificate. Again through his father's influence at the Court of Directors, Prinsep was given a position at the Calcutta Mint, where he worked under H. H. Wilson. In 1822, however, Prinsep was sent to Benares to head the mint there. While in Benares, he caused the streets to be widened and bridges and ghats to be built, and he installed that city's first modern sewage system. He also took the city's first census and made drawings of Benares, later published in England (*Views and Illustrations of Benares*, 1824, 1825). In 1830 he returned to Calcutta and worked directly under Wilson at the Mint and at the Asiatic Society. He also helped edit a periodical with Major Herbert, an engineer and old friend from Benares. In 1832, when Wilson prepared to leave, Prinsep replaced him both at the Mint and at the Society. For more details see "Memoir," *Essays on Indian Antiquities, Historic, Numismatics, Paleographics of the Late James Prinsep*, ed. E. Thomas (London: John Murray, 1858), I, i–xiv.

then Secretary of the Asiatic Society, unravelled the mystery of the Brahmi script and thus was able to read the edicts of the great Emperor Asoka.[61] The rediscovery of Buddhist India was the last great achievement of the British Orientalists. The later discoveries would be made by Continental Europeans or by Indians themselves. In 1846, two years after Ram Camul Sen's death, a young Bengali named Rajendralal Mitra joined the Asiatic Society as an assistant librarian.[62] In Mitra the scholarly values and ideals of English Orientalism found their first major Indian exponent.

Whereas Bengalis such as Mitra carried on the scholarly tradition of the Orientalists, most other members of the intelligentsia continued to maintain their cultural values and ideals in defense in Hinduism. In many ways, the next stage of the renaissance began with the formation of the *Dharma Sabha* in 1831. It is still fashionable in the mid-twentieth century to attack Radhakant Deb, Ram Camul Sen, and Bhabanicharan Bannerji, the leaders of this organization, for their defense of *sati*. The tendency has been to accuse these members of the intelligentsia of being callously indifferent to human suffering and of supporting inhumane treatment of females. This version of the basic issues underlying the *sati* controversy tends to be misleading, if not incomplete. Perhaps no other episode in British Indian history has been so thoroughly worked over in countless historical texts to demonstrate the social-reform aspect of Bentinck's administration.

In contrast to the historiographical ambiguity surrounding Macaulay and his Minute of 1835, Bentinck's formal decree abolishing *sati* has been approved formally and universally as a humanitarian act of great importnce—a milestone in the history of social reform in modern India. Actually, these actions were equally motivated by liberal intentions and both aroused violent opposition from the same highly-Europeanized segment of the Calcutta intelligentsia. Unfortunately for this wing of the intelligentsia, as soon as they affixed their signatures to a petition protesting Bentinck's legal abolition of the custom, they lost their earlier status as modernizers (gained through reform work with Orientalists) and became stereotyped as the reactionary defenders of Hindu orthodoxy. The reason that the *sati* controversy has been histori-

[61] For the most authentic and comprehensive study of the Prinsep discovery in print see the appropriate sections on antiquities and history in R. Mitra, *Centenary Review*.

[62] B. N. Bandyopadhyay, *Rajendralal Mitra* (S-s-c series, 1961), p. 9.

cally treated in this one-dimensional or polarized way is not difficult to understand. In the first place, because the Hindu custom of allowing widows to immolate themselves on the funeral pyre of their dead husbands was so obviously cruel and inhumane, we have taken it for granted that those who supported its abolition were heroes while those who opposed it were villains.

This dubious practice of explaining history from the standpoint of self-righteous moral indignation perhaps only half explains why historians have left us caricatures instead of real people arguing for and against *sati*. It seems that we have seen the controversy entirely through Western eyes—as a barbaric custom typical of "Asiatic" cultures but somehow unthinkable in the West. By evaluating Bentinck's reforms solely within the Indian context, instead of viewing them in the global perspective of the growing humanitarian consciousness of man's inhumanity to man, writers have made the *sati* issue appear to involve a benevolent Westerner's crusade against the stronghold of Hindu decadence.[63]

To clarify the argument, it should be stated that our rather limited view of the *sati* controversy seems to betray a lack of cultural and historical relativism. On the other hand, this is not to argue in defense of *sati* as the *condition sine qua non* of the Bengali self-image of its life and culture. To be sure, historically there was an heroic aspect of *sati* in which Hindus recalled the valor of Rajput women who burned themselves willingly rather than submit to the Muslim invaders. But the practice of *sati* in Bentinck's time was thoroughly unrelated "functionally" to that of Rajput days.[64] Official reports show that many Bengali widows were murdered by their relatives, who drugged them and led them involuntarily to the burning pyre. Therefore, even from a relativist point of view,

[63] Percival Spear in his most recent history of modern India seems to have transcended the older Western view of the abolition of *sati* and explains Bentinck's motives in a refreshingly objective and relativistic manner. Spear concludes that Bentinck attacked Hindu social evils "in the name of universal moral law (which for him was Western moral law)" and that "the action on suttee represented the imposition of Western values on Indian society." P. Spear, *A History of India* (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books, 1965), p. 125.

[64] Writes Spear, "In orthodox theory this practice was a voluntary action on the part of the Hindu widow anxious to rejoin her god-husband through the purifying flames. She was *sati* or devoted. In practice it was often induced by relatives ambitious for the prestige of a *sati* in the family, greedy of her property, or wanting one less mouth to feed." *Ibid.*

it is difficult to justify *sati* or more important the defense of *sati*, in the same manner that, let us say, Jomo Kenyatta defends clitoridectomy among the Kikuyu in his *Facing Mt. Kenya*:

> The real argument lies not in the defence of the surgical operation or its details, but in the understanding of a very important fact in the tribal psychology of the Gikuyu—namely, that this operation is still regarded as the very essence of an institution which has enormous educational, social, moral, and religious implications, quite apart from the operation itself. For the present it is impossible for a member of the tribe to imagine an initiation without clitoridectomy. Therefore the abolition of the surgical element in this custom means to the Gikuyu the abolition of the whole institution.[65]

From the vantage point of the psychology of encounter, however, it seems to matter very little whether the practice of clitoridectomy among the Kikuyu functioned as Kenyatta said it did or whether *sati* in Bengal had lost its cultural function and was as much a vestigial element of Hindu tradition as it was an offense to the humanitarian reformer. The important thing is that the reaction against Bentinck's abolition of the custom in 1829 was almost identical with the reaction of Africans in 1929 when the Church of Scotland Mission to the Kikuyu issued an order prohibiting the initiation rite among all of its followers and among those who sent children to its schools. The zealous attempt by the mission to decree the custom out of existence led to a controversy that not only split the church but compelled "a large section of people to break away from the main body and begin to seek other means to satisfy their spiritual hunger without denouncing their social customs."[66] As Kenyatta tells us, this particular grievance was joined to a list of others: "Apart from religious sentiments, there was a general discontentment about political and economic affairs of the country, especially about the land question. At this time people who broke away from the missionary influence, together with the indigenous population, began to form their own religious and educational societies. . . ."[67]

One difference between the Bengali and African controversies, separated as they were by a century, was the role of the British gov-

[65] J. Kenyatta, *Facing Mt. Kenya* (New York: Random House, Inc., n.d.), p. 128.
[66] *Ibid.*, p. 263.
[67] *Ibid.*

ernment. The Bengali petition of 1830 against Bentinck's abolition was rejected by Parliament. In 1930 the issue of whether or not clitoridectomy should be abolished was raised in the House of Commons, and a committee was established to investigate the matter. Kenyatta himself was invited to express his views. According to Kenyatta, "It was then agreed that the best way was not by force of an enactment, and that the best way was to leave the people concerned free to choose what custom was best suited to their changing conditions."[68]

In 1931, the group for abolition of the initiation rite brought its case before a Conference on African Children that was held in Geneva under the sponsorship of the Save the Children Fund. Whereas a hundred years earlier, in Calcutta, the Orientalists and "traditionalist" intelligentsia found themselves on the defensive, now the Westernizers seemed to have their backs to the wall. The Westernizers argued "that the time was ripe when this 'barbarous custom' should be abolished."[69] In their view, "like all other 'heathen' customs, it could be abolished at once by law."[70] However, writes Kenyatta: "This urge for abolishing a people's social custom by force of law was not wholeheartedly accepted by the majority of the delegates in the Conference. General opinion was for education which would enable the people to choose what customs to keep and which ones they would like to get rid of."[71]

This kind of psychological response by non-Western peoples under colonial rule to even the most well-intentioned forms of Westernization should help suggest why there was almost unanimous disapproval of Bentinck's action by the thinking elite in Calcutta (including Rammohun Roy, who thought *sati* ought to die "quietly and unobservedly").[72] In both the Bengali and African cases, it should be noted, it was the European-educated community and not the truly indigenous orthodox who initiated movements against legal interference with what they valued as deeply integrated cultural traditions. To reiterate, *sati* in nineteenth-century Bengal seems to have become very different from the idealistic act that it was in the middle period. A careful, well-documented history of *sati* in Bengal before and after Plassey could be very revealing. At

[68] *Ibid.*, p. 126.
[69] *Ibid.*
[70] *Ibid.*
[71] *Ibid.*, p. 127.
[72] Rammohun quoted in N. S. Bose, p. 132.

present, it is by no means clear whether this custom was intrinsically a part of the regional configuration or whether it was a facet of cultural distortion produced by the debilitating forces of British colonialism. What is important is that, for the intelligentsia, *sati* became a key symbol in their new posture of cultural apologetics.

In general, it might be said that the people who banded together to petition against Bentinck's *sati* decree on January 14, 1830, were largely the same people who opposed the new policy of colonizing India with Europeans. As the Calcutta elite, they naturally had a vested interest in the Permanent Settlement and in the Agency House system.[73] Unlike Rammohun Roy, who openly encouraged Alexander Duff[74] and who supported free trade and colonialization out of a blind faith in the nobility of English intentions,[75] the majority of his peers in Calcutta looked upon Bentinck's Westernizing policies with fear for the future.[76]

In the January 14 petition, the Calcutta elite defended their position against abolishing *sati* not by condoning an inhuman act but by pointing to all previous governor-generals who had respected the custom (however misused) as a vital aspect of Hinduism.[77] They questioned the right of a foreigner to interfere with a people's religion and ethics.[78] In short, instead of appreciating Bentinck's philanthropic zeal, they accused him of religious and cultural intolerance.

By December, 1830, the older generation of the intelligentsia had institutionalized their protest against Bentinck by organizing

[73] Tripathi, pp. 224–234.

[74] Upendranath Ball writes: "he was shocked at Derozio and did not believe in education which did not teach sound morals." U. Ball, *Rammohan Roy* (Calcutta: U. Roy and Sons, 1933), p. 175.

[75] Dwarkanath Tagore, P. K. Tagore, and Rammohun openly and consistently supported the British plantation system in India.

[76] Amales Tripathi believes that the Bengal elite did not oppose the abolition of *sati* because of perversity but "because defeat might open the floodgate of further positive actions . . . which would shake the whole social fabric and endanger the vested interests." Tripathi, p. 225.

[77] In the petition, Warren Hastings, Charles Wilkins, and Jonathan Duncan were praised for their understanding of Hinduism. Duncan, for example, because he was a social reformer as well as an Orientalist was referred to as the "excellent" administrator who "will be remembered by the natives [of Hindustan] with gratitude." "Petition of January 14, 1830," quoted in *Raja Rammohun Roy and Progressive Movements in India: A Selection from Records, 1775–1845*, p. 157.

[78] *Ibid.*, p. 156.

what they called the *Dharma Sabha*.[79] In the context of the cultural issues that brought it into existence, the *Dharma Sabha* may best be defined as a society in defense of the Hindu way of life or culture.

The development of the *Dharma Sabha* is important for at least two reasons. First, it represented a definite polarization in the ranks of the intelligentsia vis-à-vis Westernization. The *Dharma Sabha* became the earliest organized group of Indian 'slavophiles,' while the Derozians who supported Bentinck's policies by means of their own societies became the first 'Westerners.' Second, because the *Dharma Sabha* organized its defense of Hindu society and culture against alien intrusion and used collective political means (such as petitions to the Crown) to articulate its position, this association became the earliest protonationalist movement in modern India.

That the *Dharma Sabha* of the early nineteenth century was a group of bigoted orthodox Brahmans meeting periodically to conspire against modernity in India is, in large part, untrue. Most of them were not Brahmans,[80] and they were certainly not orthodox—for they were the same people who worked with Orientalists in promoting syncretic schemes. And if they were bigoted, their hostility was not directed necessarily against modernization as such but against what they came to fear as intrusive forms of Westernization. Since they were organized and led by Bengalis who had worked with the English for as long as twenty years, the institution was extremely Western in orientation. The executive body of the *Dharma Sabha* included a president, a board of directors, a secretary, and a treasurer, and the members regularly organized committees for special purposes.[81] It might be added that the *Dharma Sabha* conducted its meetings according to strict rules of parliamentary procedure, a form of Westernization acquired from contact with the British.[82]

As for the general belief that the *Dharma Sabha* was organized simply to defend *sati*, this also is inaccurate. Bentinck's act was the event that impelled the Bengalis to institutionalize their protest against the new cultural policy. From its inception, the *Dharma*

[79] The earliest informal meetings probably started in February, 1830. See *ibid.*, pp. 163–165.

[80] In 1835, the staff of the Friend of India recorded their amazement that this "orthodox group [*Dharma Sabha*] did not contain a single Brahman." "Proceedings of the Dhurma Subha," *Friend of India*, XIX (May 7, 1835), 145.

[81] *Ibid.*

[82] *Ibid.*

Sabha was clearly protonationalist. On December 1, 1830, the group's program called for an Indianization of the civil service, a hands-off policy on the Permanent Settlement, a warning about the evil effects of colonization, a defense of *sati*, a plan for aiding the rural poor, and a proposal for aiding Calcutta's poor by building a charitable institution and a hospital.[83] One aspect of the program which has often been taken out of context was its advocacy of militant means in defending Hinduism against the Derozians and missionaries. Instances have been recorded of the group's threatening to excommunicate from the upper strata of Calcutta society families in which religious conversions and other extreme forms of cultural estrangement had taken place.

It seems evident, therefore, that the process of polarization represented by Macaulayism had the immediate impact of dividing the loyalties of the Bengali intelligentsia into two opposite camps. The Calcutta cultural mediator who for decades had responded favorably to the culture of the European (who was himself favorably impressed with Indian culture) now faced the different view that all patterns of reform were an integral part of Western civilization and that all Asian civilizations were almost by definition static and decadent. The intelligentsia in Calcutta were compelled to confront a crisis in identity. The Derozians temporarily set themselves adrift in a cultural limbo between their own heritage, which they rejected, and the Utopia across the seas, which they understood only imperfectly and to which they could never belong. Most of the intelligentsia, however, responded to the crisis by identifying with the Orientalist-reconstructed view of Hinduism, which they romanticized as apologists.

If Anglicists such as Trevelyan and Macaulay believed that they were writing the obituary for Hindu cultural customs and civilization as they had succeeded in doing be for the Orientalist movement, they proved to be poor prophets. Trevelyan's Hindu "corpse" began to stir in the 1830's, started kicking in the 1840's, became more aggressive in the 1850's, and emerged as belligerently defiant in the 1860's. Though the British Orientalist movement died during the Bentinck administration, its primary legacy of a reconstituted Hindu cultural tradition lived on in the self-image of the Bengali intelligentsia.

[83] Samāchār Chandrikā article quoted in B. B. Majumdar, *History of Political Thought from Rammohun to Dayananda, 1821–1884* (Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1934), I, 159.

PART VI

Conclusion

Before Asia is in a position to co-operate with the culture of Europe, she must base her own structure on a synthesis of all the different cultures which she has. When, taking her stand on such a culture, she turns toward the West, she will take, with a confident sense of mental freedom, her own view of truth, from her own vantage ground, and open a new vista of thought to the world. Otherwise, she will allow her priceless inheritance to crumble into dust, and trying to replace it clumsily with feeble imitations of the West, make herself superfluous, cheap and ludicrous. If she thus loses her *individuality* and her specific power to *exist*, will it in the least help the rest of the world? Will not her terrible bankruptcy involve also the Western mind? If the whole world grows at last into an exaggerated West, then such an illimitable parody of the modern age will die, crushed beneath its own absurdity!

—RABINDRANATH TAGORE

XVI

The Quest for New Perspectives on the Encounter of Civilizations

As portrayed in this book, the Orientalists bear little resemblance to the dismal image that has been theirs since the Victorian era. The Orientalists served as avenues linking the regional elite with the dynamic civilization of contemporary Europe. They contributed to the formation of a new Indian middle class and assisted in the professionalization of the Bengali intelligentsia. They started schools, systematized languages, brought printing and publishing to India, and encouraged the proliferation of books, journals, newspapers, and other media of communication. Their impact was urban and secular. They built the first modern scientific laboratories in India, and taught European medicine. They were neither static classicists nor averse to the idea of progress; and they both historicized the Indian past and stimulated a consciousness of history in the Indian intellectual. It was they who transmitted a new sense of identity to Bengalis that enlarged what Robert Bellah has called "the capacity for rational goal setting," an instrumental process in the development of a modern outlook.[1]

The fact that British Orientalists were modernizers of Indian culture despite their opposition to Westernization should suggest that these two processes are not necessarily synonymous. Guy Metraux, in the preface of a UNESCO book of studies by various authors entitled *New Asia* seems to have diagnosed correctly the confusion which results from the proposition that Westernization

[1] R. N. Bellah, "Epilogue," *Religion and Progress in Modern Asia* (New York: The Free Press, 1965), p. 195.

equals modernization. In his view, this correlation between a "geographical or cultural concept (the West) and a social process (modernization)" really represents a historical accident: "In reality the latter term is preferable, because what the West brought to Asia was those elements which came to constitute modern society, i.e.: new forms of political organization, new bases for economic activity, new social classes, new ways of life which removed traditional societies from the patterns which had been theirs for centuries."[2]

In the context of the Orientalist-Anglicist alternatives to modernization, Metraux seems to stand with the universalism of the eighteenth century against the nationalism of the nineteenth. He expresses a tolerance derived from a conviction that stresses unity over diversity, process over pattern. Metraux is distinguished from the nineteenth-century system builders—whether Marx or Macaulay—in that he completely lacks a narrow, European-centered view of the static Orient. Twentieth-century universalists are quite aware of the close correlation in the nineteenth-century world-view between an appalling ignorance of the languages, cultures, and history of Asia, and strong, unfounded prejudices about "Asiatics." Perhaps most important, new universalists like Metraux guard themselves against the older tendency to devise universal systems based upon the parochial contemporary European experience.

Unfortunately, however, the problem is not that easily solved. The Orientalists, despite their cosmopolitanism (or perhaps because of it), identified closely with an alien culture and sought to change it from within. Like the Jesuits, the Orientalists evolved a cultural policy based as little on the naive assertion that all peoples would respond uniformly to modern elements, as it was on the deceptive proposition that modernization everywhere would be a pale reflection of one's own cultural self-image. Indeed, the Jesuits in China, the Orientalists in India, and possibly the Peace Corps recruits today, not only share a healthy appreciation for other culture patterns but operate most effectively from a belief in the relativity and plurality of cultures. What Orientalists actually proposed were creative syncretic schemes in which alien and indigenous traits were combined meaningfully to produce a desired change. In fact, this is precisely how Metraux ultimately resolves the dilemma of Westernization and modernization:

[2] G. S. Metraux, "Preface," *The New Asia: Readings in the History of Mankind* (New York: New American Library, 1965), p. x.

> When Asian countries "adopted" Western techniques and ideas, they did not entirely relinquish their ways. There was super-imposition of institutions, various forms of syncretism, new attitudes arising side by side with ancient modes of thought. But whatever the fulness of change that took place, or its pace, Asian societies have created, or are creating a way of life that enables them to participate fully in a modern world community.[3]

To some readers, even after a careful reading of this book, the differences between the Orientalist and Westernizer alternatives to modernity may seem small. One critic has gone so far as to argue that Orientalism was not so much alternative to as it was an alternative of Westernization. The only difference here between Anglicists and Orientalists is that the Anglicists went farther than the Orientalists in importing Western values wholesale and were less sympathetic to Oriental culture and to the need of integrating the new values smoothly into the old fabric. From this vantage point, there was little that was different in substance beween the two alternative programs other than a conflict in cultural values. Was not the source of the actual social and cultural changes desired by both types of modernizers almost invariably the West? Indeed, the Westernizer argues, are not all modern values in essence Western values, even though described under cosmopolitan universalist labels and introduced by Orientalists?

This is a persuasive argument that only demonstrates even more how perplexing the problem is. Fundamentally, however, such a position may be regarded more as a liberal, fair-minded restatement of the Westernizer's ideal than as a valid description of two very different approaches to change and modernity. In the first place, nineteenth-century Europe was not so much the source of modernity as it was the setting for modernizing processes that were themselves transforming Western cultures. In the midst of the Industrial Revolution, a Victorian patriot like Macaulay may have imagined a very real relationship between something as universal as industrialization and something as particularist as the genius of British culture. From this stems the rationale for his Anglicist position: for Indians to modernize, they must also adopt English dress, manners, and language. This view, in the light of the history of industrial modernization since the British example early in the nineteenth century, is not without some degree of absurdity. The industrialization of cultures as diverse as those of Germany, Japan, and Russia

[3] *Ibid.*

was not only accomplished without benefit of British-style social and political institutions but was deliberately formulated in direct opposition to the British model. Secular paternalism under Bismarck, traditional Japanese paternalism under the Meiji, and Marxist collectivism under Stalin were all radical departures from the industrial capitalism of the British Victorians. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that, in all four cases, industrialism was accompanied by nationalism which intensified loyalty to four distinct cultures and reinforced older traditions fostering a sense of legitimacy in each of the nations.

On the other hand, the Orientalist had a very different view of change. For him the important thing was to set into motion the process of modernization through which Indians might change themselves according to their own value system. It mattered little whether the source of the stimulus were British, French, Scandinavian, or Indian. The model for modernity could as readily be an indigenous institution rediscovered in the Indian past as it could be an idea or value of contemporary Europe. The important thing was that the cultural innovation should be meaningful to the people for whom it was intended. The end result of this kind of modernization would therefore be creative and evolutionary rather than imitative and diffusionist. Each culture that achieved modernity would not be absorbed simply into the dynamic West expanding along its frontiers but would constitute a new synthesis of the old and the new, the alien and the native.

If indeed this work demonstrates a new perspective on the role of British Orientalism in India, it was in no small way the result of exploring the "psychological" aspects of the encounter between the British and Bengalis. By analyzing a special sort of historical data, i.e., cultural values, attitudes, beliefs and the quest for identity, one should begin to see the persisting problems of impact and response, continuity and discontinuity, tradition and modernity in a totally different light. This is not a proposal for a new form of determinism. On the contrary, this study should make evident the bankruptcy of any monocausal explanation for the impact of the British in South Asia. The argument is simply that any social, economic, political or other analysis of modernization that ignores underlying cultural values is incomplete.

It is hoped that the use of the psycho-cultural dimension of analysis in this book has exposed another related kind of incompleteness or distortion. On the one level, there is simply too much evidence

against the image of a monolithic British nation in India which symbolizes either a multiplicity of sins as imperialist or a multiplicity of virtues as guardian of a sacred trusteeship. For many persons of today, the problem of interaction between India and the West is reduced neatly to the grim record of economic exploitation in India and economic drain to England. This study of the Orientalist period does not deny such a record but simply exposes these images as plausible half-truths that obscure the complexity of culture contact and acculturation.

On another level, there is an overgeneralization of ideal types to represent particular historical forces in relation to one another. *Babu*, I. C. S. official, and missionary in India are terms so loosely used that they really suggest stereotypes. In the context of cultural attitudes, there were, as is shown in this book, some missionaries like William Carey and others like Alexander Duff. There were Orientalized as well as ethnocentric civil servants. If we examine the training programs for civil servants, we find one kind of orientation at Haileybury and another at the College of Fort William. The Englishman who went to serve in India could not possibly isolate himself from his new environment. He was compelled to respond in some way, and that response was as much a determining factor in his administrative judgment as anything else. In one period, the problem of identity in an alien environment may have been solved by acculturation, while in another, Englishmen constructed fortress-like clubs to protect their wives, their children and their racial purity from the pernicious effects of an "Asiatic" culture.

On the Indian side, in the light of the over-all problem of Western intrusion—cultural encounter—and modernization, the Bengal experience seems to point to one generalization: the receptiveness to change on the part of the indigenous intelligentsia in Calcutta largely depended on their evaluation of the colonialist agent introducing phenomena from abroad. As stated in the introduction, the term intelligentsia has been employed in this book somewhat in the manner of Toynbee, Redfield, and Singer—as denoting cultural intermediaries between the foreigner and their own people.[4] From this standpoint, the nineteenth-century historical literature that dealt with the transmission of ideas in a colonial setting without

[4] Robert Redfield and Milton Singer have developed the notion of "cultural brokers" (native intelligentsia) which is appropriate in this case. Singer defines the broker as "a new type of professional intellectual . . . who stands astride the boundaries of the cultural encounter, mediating alien cultural in-

a thorough analysis of the psychocultural relations between the native elite and the alien overlord seems almost absurd. The evidence seems to suggest strongly that Bengalis responded well to foreign ideas and customs when introduced by sympathetic Europeans (Orientalists) who were themselves highly responsive to the Hindu way of life. To express this in another way, so long as the European masters viewed modernization as cosmopolitan rather than parochial in nature, the Bengalis offered little resistance to cultural change. When Modernization took on the guise of Macaulayism, the older response pattern collapsed and the cultural barricades of nationalism were rapidly erected.

Throughout the book, the words modernization and renaissance (revitalization) have been used interchangeably. In this sense, the Bengal renaissance could be taken as depicting the general impact of Orientalism. On the other hand, as the facts also suggest, the events, attitudes, and ideas associated with the Bengal renaissance are far too autonomous conceptually to be comfortably subsumed under the rubric of modernization. The original notion of renaissance that referred to a definite period in the history of Italian civilization or to the pre-Reformation humanist movements of northern Europe has been expanded considerably by historians during recent years to include a range of new patterns.[5] Largely with the aim of legitimatizing their respective cultures' advance into modernity, historically minded intellectuals in the non-Western world have freely reinterpreted the European model or models to suit the values im-

fluences to the natives and interpreting the indigenous culture to the foreigners." M. Singer, "The Great Tradition in a Metropolitan Center: Madras," *Traditional India: Structure and Change* (Philadelphia: The American Folklore Society, 1959), p. 141.

[5] Aside from South Asia, the terms renaissance, revitalization, or awakening have been employed in regard to the following culture groups by writers with scholarly credentials: the Arabs, G. Antonius, *Arab Awakening* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1939); the Africans, T. Hodgkin, *Nationalism in Colonial Africa* (New York: New York University Press, 1957), pp. 169–184; the Turks, W. C. Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (New York: New American Library, 1957), pp. 168–176; the Iranians, R. Arasteh, *Education and Social Awakening in Iran* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962); and the Chinese, Hu Shih, *The Chinese Renaissance* (New York: Paragon Book Reprint Corporation, 1963).

plicit in their self-image as a culture. One result has been a confusing proliferation of crosscultural renaissance theories that are basically variations on two approaches: the diffusionist argument, which traces revitalization movements in countries outside the Western world to the spread of European culture,[6] or the evolutionary argument, which stresses parallel developments that are not modelled after but are stimulated by cultural encounter with the West.[7]

From whichever theoretical position, scholars of non-Western renaissances are faced with the problem of defining their concept as a historical period, as a culture pattern, and as a sociocultural process. The failure to distinguish clearly between these uses of the term renaissance has often led to considerable confusion. Historically, for example, scholars of Asia and Africa are inclined to view renaissances in those two areas as transition periods between the breakdown of traditional societies and the rise of national consciousness or nationalism.[8] Since to many a historian of Europe the word Renaissance denotes a specific series of events that occurred at a fixed time in the history of the West, the Asian-African use of the word is inappropriate, if not meaningless.

Contemplating renaissance as a culture pattern is closely related to considering it a periodic concept. Hu Shih's modernizing movement in 1917–1918 has come to be accepted semantically as the Chinese renaissance. In the Islamic world, the historiography of Arab, Turkish, or Iranian renaissances also suggests definite culture configurations. Again, among scholars specializing in European history (or those who utilize their conceptual models), renaissance with a capital R seems to imply a universalization of a particular set of culture traits. A classic example of this viewpoint is Jacob Burckhardt's highly influential work entitled *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*.[9] This book, and others like it, have made it

[6] With reference to what has already been said about the psychology of cultural encounter, this posture on renaissance may be likened to the Westernizer view in general. S. C. Sarkar in India and Hu Shih in China are good cases in point.

[7] One of the convenient but misleading terms applied to this position is neotraditionalist and in India would cover such figures as Vivekananda and Aurobindo.

[8] See for example, Hodgkin, pp. 169–184.

[9] J. Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (New York: Modern Library edition, 1954).

virtually impossible to think of the word renaissance without acknowledging the unique role played by the Italian people.

It is only when renaissance is treated as a process that the term begins to lose its historical and cultural uniqueness and that, like nationalism or modernization, it can be universally applied.[10] Indeed, the use of processes as analytical tools by social scientists has had revolutionary implications. This method of thinking about ideas, customs, and institutions has opened a challenging dimension in comparative studies.

The analytical use of the term renaissance as a process has had a liberalizing effect in that it can be applied to any culture, high or low, East or West, at any period in history.[11] The problem, of course, is to discover a universal set of components that accurately describe a sociocultural entity undergoing a special kind of transformation. Besides the obvious difficulty involved in such a task there is the unsatisfying quality in process analysis by which the richness of detail in the older period and pattern studies are replaced by a set of intellectualized principles.

It is evident that the over-all problems of renaissance, whether in its European context or used with reference to an area outside of Europe, must be rethought on the basis of new conceptual criteria. The fact that the generalized concept of renaissance has been applied to their history and tradition by non-European peoples should be reason enough to abandon the older European-centered notion of *the* Renaissance. Nor must we perpetuate the confusion that inevitably results from misapplying the European model to cultures whose "rebirth" occurs in totally different historical circumstances. Moreover, if we choose to view renaissance as a process, care must be taken not to generalize too freely unless there is solid monographic detail to back up each principle.

The historiographical is one viable method for treating renaissance. Indeed, it is a perfect antidote for any rigid absolutist view of the concept. In the European tradition a work such as Wallace K. Ferguson's *The Renaissance in Historical Thought* not only has broadened the general interpretation of the period of the *quattrocento* and the *cinquecento* but has related the very concept of

[10] One highly successful attempt to do this is A. F. P. Wallace, "Revitalization Movements: Some Theoretical Considerations For Their Comparative Study," *American Anthropologist*, LVIII (June, 1956), 264–281.

[11] This is precisely what has been done very impressively in A. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), IX.

renaissance to its changing image in the minds of historians during four centuries of reevaluation and redefinition.[12] The important lesson to be learned from the Ferguson historiographical approach is that a highly effective means for ascertaining the nature of renaissance is to discover what different people, living in different periods, thought it was.

Regrettably, however, Ferguson's historical relativity has a limited applicability when it comes to understanding more recent non-Western renaissances. Despite his liberalization of the concept, he is still referring to a changing view of a single period and pattern within one community of cultures. The challenge now is to apply this relativity to a diversity of cultures.

One concrete way to begin a pattern analysis of the Bengal renaissance is to isolate the six fundamental characteristics or traits used in this book. These were: the Vedic golden age, the Puritanical image of the Vedantic age, the post-Vedantic or Hindu golden age, Reformation Europe as golden age, the millenium as golden age, and the revitalization of Bengali language and literature. Each of these components has been traced from the circumstances of its birth to its growth in the propitious atmosphere created by Orientalist policy. Hopefully, it has been demonstrated how each one of these ideas rather than being the vision of a single man was in reality the invention of several men interacting with one another within institutions established to meet policy needs.

There was neither a single "father of renascent India" nor an individual who promoted his revitalization scheme apart from some cluster of like-minded individuals. Behind Jones and Colebrooke stood the Asiatic Society; behind Rammohun, the *Brahmo Sabha*; behind Mrytunjay, the College of Fort William; behind Derozio, Hindu College; and behind William Carey, both Fort William College and Serampore Mission.

The Bengal renaissance was the child of eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism and pragmatic British policy built around the need for an acculturated civil-service class. Calcutta, made the capital of British India through what might be termed historical accident, provided the ideal environment. Spurred on by Orientalists engaged in a scholarly reconstruction of the Hindu tradition, a newly formed intelligentsia selectively reinterpreted their heritage and strove to reshape their culture in the new image.

[12] W. K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance In Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948).

Surveyed historically, the evolution of the renaissance follows the chronological scheme of the book. In the first period, 1772–1800, the Indo-Aryan discoveries represented the earliest of the distinguishing qualities of the Bengal renaissance. In the period 1800–13, the development of Bengali language and literature simultaneously with a continued glorification of Sanskritic civilization also became components of the Calcutta-based renaissance pattern. From 1813 to 1827, H. H. Wilson's idea of a Hindu golden age and the Serampore interpretation of the Protestant Reformation model were two additional fertile conceptions that enriched the flowering of Bengali culture. After 1827, Derozio's contribution of the eighteenth-century view of universal progress represented the final facet of renaissance under the Orientalists.

Defining the Bengal renaissance as a process is not an easy task. Too few scholars have addressed themselves to the problem of collating the multiple studies of non-Western revitalization movements and evolving a viable set of generalizations. Perhaps the best that can be done at present is to examine the Bengal renaissance in relation to what is apparently the common denominator of all such renaissances—the classicistic preoccupation with a golden age.

In sum, the rediscovery and revitalization of a Hindu golden age was probably the Orientalist's most enduring ideological contribution to modern India's cultural self-image. Knowledge of this golden age would become the cohesive ideology underlying a new sense of community. It is doubtful that the rise of nationalism would have been possible without the sense of community, the sense of community without a collective feeling of self-respect, and self-respect without the stimulus of a rediscovered golden age.

The classicistic pursuit of golden ages should facilitate understanding of the subtle difference between modernization and renaissance in Bengal during the heyday of the Orientalists. If modernization is regarded as the immediate social, cultural, and psychological readjustments to the new stimulus provided by the Orientalists, then renaissance was seemingly the ensemble of historical reorientation to change. We might view modernization as consisting of the actual institutional and other changes that resulted from spatial contact. The term renaissance nearly always seems to imply a manipulation of temporal patterns to suit changing values and norms.

The important question is whether Orientalist-inspired classicism in Bengal was a correlative of modernization. As has already

been intimated, a major intellectual revolution had taken place between 1772 and 1828 in Calcutta. The genesis of urbanization, professionalization, the proliferation of communicative media, the growth of literacy, and other commonly recognized attributes of a modern transformation can be traced back to the implementation of Orientalist policy. Many historians have found it difficult to reconcile the modernizing impact of the Orientalists with the apparently antiquarian nature of their classicism. In short, how can this zealous appreciation of India's past glories be reconciled with the ardent faith of the modernizer who projects the golden age not into man's history but into his future?

It appears that many writers have confused the historical content of classicism with the function of classicism as a cultural aspiration. The fact that Rammohun readily accepted the Jones-Colebrooke image of the Vedic golden age is less significant than the way in which he refashioned the model as an instrument for cultural change. An underlying significance of Kashi Prasad Ghose's stirring defense of the classical Indian polity against James Mill's indictment of Hindu civilization is not that Ghose identified himself as traditionalist but that he secularized the image of the past. This important process of secularization represented an act of contemporary cultural creativity.

This point will become clear enough if we examine the Bengal classical models against G. E. von Grunebaum's analytical scheme for judging the real impact of classicistic movements.[13] In his "Concept of Cultural Classicism," Von Grunebaum lists six categories to help determine the nature of the classicistic ideal: function in the cultural setting; its psychological dimension; the meaningfulness of the attributes accorded the model; the genetic relationship between model culture and classicistic culture; the influence of the historical situation on the way in which the model is manipulated; and classicism described in terms of its operational effectiveness. For our purposes, an analysis of the Bengali experience in the light of the first four categories should suffice.

To reiterate, the important question is whether or not a correlation exists between the classicistic *zeitgeist* of the Bengal renaissance and the modernizing impact of the Orientalists. If we start

[13] G. E. von Grunebaum, "The Concept of Cultural Classicism," *Modern Islam: The Search for Cultural Identity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1964), pp. 48–128.

with function and ask what Orientalist-inspired classicism purported to do, the answer would probably be to justify change.

British intrusion in the eighteenth century from Plassey (1757) to the Permanent Settlement (1793) so disrupted the social system of the traditional elite of Bengal that when Orientalists did provide a golden age-dark age polarity many Bengalis readily accepted it. The Bengalis who sought new interpretations of their heritage—the Rammohuns, the Mrytunjays, the Ghoses—were a newly established intellectual and social elite that owed its transformation and privileged position to European contact. The pre-Macaulay Bengali intelligentsia, unlike the later nationalists, adopted the golden-age models not only as an explanation for their desperate situation in history, but as a rationalization for change (i.e., to reinforce their recently acquired status).

This helps us to understand why Bengalis in the early nineteenth century were so receptive to ideas and customs brought from overseas and why the Orientalists were far more effective than the Westernizers as modernizers. The reason the intelligentsia responded so well to H. H. Wilson's syncretic schemes for social improvement was that they believed that the Orientalists aimed not at the wholesale Westernization (or the partial eradication) of their culture but at Hindu revitalization. Whether, in the end, Hinduism could have survived the experiments in cultural fusion had Bentinck allowed them to do so is beside the point. In spite of their willing transformation, the intelligentsia were simply not prepared to disavow their heritage. On the contrary, they required a sympathetic cultural ideal projected historically to rationalize their desire for change.

A psychological interpretation of Bengali classicism in terms of whether or not it was experienced as "a dynamic or dynamizing concept" or as "a static notion of perfection"[14] should help to reinforce the modernizing thesis. Did a Rammohun seriously entertain the possibility that the age of the Indo-Aryans could be repeated in nineteenth-century India? Or did he use the image as a tool in the service of modernizing the Hindu tradition? Did the Serampore missionaries seriously predict an exact repetition of the European reformation in India? Or did they use the model as "an ideal whose recapture will transform it into a means of advance-

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 110–111.

ment and enrichment of those who succeed in using it?"[15] The fact that originators of these ages of gold were all committed to programs of social action should indicate that they used history not to shape the present in the image of the past but to rediscover guidelines in their heritage appropriate to a society in transition.

The third question is whether, from an examination of the models themselves, we find the values of the creators traditionalist or modernist.[16] It would appear that all the models presented in this book express dissatisfaction with the present and a corresponding desire to revive some quality of the past. H. T. Colebrooke called for a revival of the mathematical and scientific spirit of the ancient Hindus; Rammohun asked for a restoration of the monotheistic tradition and a high level of civilization. In his golden age, *Kulin* polygamy was unknown, *sati* was prohibited, and the social system operated harmoniously for the good of society. K. C. Ghose depicted a classical Hindu political structure which included a built-in checks-and-balances system.

The answers to these three questions should be obvious. Every influential model in the Orientalist period reflected a value system essentially modern in spirit or at least revolutionary in its unfavorable depiction of the present. In fact, this is precisely the subversive element of renaissance that many interpreters of the past have been apt to overlook. Since every classical model is reversely linked to a dark age visibly in the present, every dynamic classicist is invariably an antitraditional rebel. In this sense, the Bengali intelligentsia who chose to reinterpret their past in an effort to change the present were as modernist as the early Derozians, who chose the alternative of Westernization at the cost of alienation.

When we set the Bengal study against Von Grunebaum's fourth category of the genetic relation between the model culture and the classicistic one,[17] the analysis adds an interesting note on the problem of Westernization and modernization. The question is whether the chosen model is "orthogentic" (in direct lineal descendency of the classicistic culture) or "heterogenetic" (foreign culture as an authoritative model). If we assume that Bengal classicism functioned to justify change, that it was experienced dynamically, that the models reflected a modern spirit—then it is also sig-

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 110.
[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 111–115.
[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 116–122.

nificant that through the nationalist period most articulate Indians have appropriated models from their own heritage. As testimony to the Orientalist legacy, from Rammohun's disenchantment with the Reformation ideal of the Baptists at Serampore to Nehru's "discovery of India,"[18] only a handful of Indian intellectuals abandoned their own heritage and identified wholly with the traditions and culture of Western civilization.

In Von Grunebaum's terms, the Orientalist approach to change in India was to introduce heterogenetic components in hope that they would become assimilated within the Indian tradition. We might even characterize H. H. Wilson's plan for Indian modernization as the ultimate orthogenetic transformation of alien imports through institutional interaction in an atmosphere free of cultural polarity. When, by means of Macaulayism, polarity became the official policy of the government, the plan of modernization changed from the orthogenetic transformation of the alien imports to the complete heterogenetic transformation of the indigenous tradition. The consequence, of course, was nationalism. Indians not only intensified their search for inspirational models within their own heritage but felt compelled to appropriate the scholarly models of the Orientalists and infuse them with heightened feelings of national pride.

It is just at the crossroads between the defeat of Orientalism and the ultimate triumph of Macaulayism in India (during the years 1830–45) that the apologetic mythification or the historiography of the Bengal renaissance begins.[19] One additional source of con-

[18] We sometimes ignore Nehru's gradual evolution as an Indian nationalist. In the introduction to *The Discovery of India*, Nehru wrote: "There is a special heritage for the people of India—not an exclusive one, for none is exclusive and all are common to the race of man—one more especially applicable to us, something that is in our flesh and blood and bones, that has gone to make us what we are and what we are likely to be. . . . It is the thought of this particular heritage and its application to the present that has long filled my mind and it is about this that I should like to write . . ." (p. 23).

[19] There is much evidence to suggest that in this period the earlier figures of the first generation became exalted as heroes and their life's work dramatized as a struggle to defend their own identity against alien intrusion. By the end of this period, historic personages such as Warren Hastings, William Jones, H. H. Wilson, Rammohun Roy, William Carey, and Derozio had become "sanctified" as charismatic heroes in the Bengali interpretation of the nineteenth-century renaissance. No scholar has yet addressed himself (at least to the author's knowledge) to this fascinating subject.

fusion about the Bengal renaissance is that we rarely bother to distinguish between the events of the Orientalist period and the sanctification of these events in the name of nationalism.

The crisis of identity and the genesis of apologetics in the wake of Macaulayism are crucial.[20] This new complexity altered the nature of classicism in Bengal. The renaissance entered another stage of development, in which the older rationalizations slowly succumbed to a defiant eschatology.

In the years 1830–45, the most distinguishing feature of the renaissance was the determined effort by factions within the intelligentsia to keep alive the vision of their predecessors. The Orientalist and Bengali creators of the six ideas of renaissance became apotheosized and their efforts were lauded as herculean attempts to revitalize India.

During these fifteen years, a Eurasian youth named Derozio was hailed as the Indian Socrates. Rammohun's image as Hindu Reformer can probably be traced to Debendranath Tagore, who, while revitalizing the idea of a *Brahmo Samaj* in 1840–42, promptly reedited the Raja's works and popularized his "message" on reformation from within. Rammohun's historical role as progenitor, in which he appears all things to all men, can be traced back to K. C. Mitra's biographic article in the *Calcutta Review* of 1845. From then on, Rammohun was regularly credited as the source for all that was modern in India. In 1834, with the publication of the second volume of Ram Camul Sen's *Dictionary of the English and Bengalee Languages*, not only was the history of the new language and literature romanticized but the place of William Carey and the College of Fort William assured in the history of the Bengal renaissance. It should be remembered that Sen's book was written during the period of Macaulay's *Minute* and Bentinck's Westernizing policies by a Bengali intellectual who had been a "native" secretary of the Asiatic Society and a charter member of the *Dharma Sabha*. Sen's introduction to the second volume was one of the first pieces of cultural apologetics by a Bengali proto-nationalist with a great sympathy for the generation of Englishmen who had respond-

[20] It was to become increasingly clear to the Calcutta elite that behind the Macaulay-style Westernization lay the arrogant belief that liberalism and progress were an integral part of Western civilization and that Asian traditions were by definition static and decadent.

ed favorably to his own language and customs. Sen's oft-quoted and accurate prediction that in the future Bengali "will become a most excellent language, equal in strength and beauty to any other," was probably intended less as a prophecy than as a gesture of defiance.[21]

For Sen, as for scores of literary historians after him, 1800 was the crucial year in the literary and cultural history of modern Bengal. "In that year," Sen wrote, "the College of Fort William was instituted and the study of the Bengali language was made imperative on young civilians."[22] In Sen's historical account, cultural self-esteem seemed so powerful a motivation that there was not a word of criticism of Carey's over-simplified, Anglicized Bengali or of his pundits' overly intricate Sanskritized Bengali. Instead, he warmly praised the pundits for "having produced many excellent works,"[23] while reserving for William Carey the heroic aspect of a selfless, devoted father to the new language.

> I must acknowledge that whatever has been done towards the revival of the Bengali language, its improvement, in fact the establishing of it as a language must be attributed to that excellent man Dr. Carey and his colleagues, by whose liberality and great exertions, many works have been carried through the press and the general tone of the language of this province so greatly raised.[24]

The high-culture Orientalists were not forgotten by the intelligentsia with whom they had worked in the early decades of the century. Bengalis such as Rajendralal Mitra carried on the scholarly tradition of the Orientalists, while an obscure pundit of the College of Fort William named Vidyasagar became Principal of Sanscrit College in 1851 and promptly revived H. H. Wilson's educational ideal of modernity through cultural fusion. It was racism and cultural imperialism that probably accounted for the increasingly nostalgic vision of the age of the Orientalists harbored by later generations of Bengali intelligentsia. On January 6, 1862, Girish Chandra Ghose, a leading Calcutta journalist, wrote:

> There are those among us who look upon this state of things [the growing feeling of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority among the Brit-

[21] R. C. Sen, *A Dictionary of the English and Bengali Languages* (Serampore: Serampore Mission Press, 1834), II, 15.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 14.
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] *Ibid.*

ish] with surprise. They call to mind the generation of Englishmen who, in past years, walked among our fathers without betraying the least symptoms of hatred . . . they call to mind . . . Jones, Colebrooke, Wilson . . . and ask how it is that the successors of such men be so unsympathetic?

As regards Indian literature . . . history, antiquities, the present race of Anglo-Indians [the British in India] . . . are lamentably ignorant. . . . Jones, Colebrooke, Wilson . . . respected our fathers and looked upon us hopefully at least with melancholy interest, as you would look on the heir of a ruined noble. But to the great unwashed abroad today, we are simply niggers—without a past; perhaps, without a future. They do not choose to know us.[25]

[25] "They Hate Us Youth," *Selections from the Writings of Girish Chandra Ghosh*, ed. M. M. Ghose (Calcutta: India Daily News Press, 1912), p. 434.

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