maturing of the will among the Sikh community to exist as a separate
nation against all odds -- a tendency that was manifested in the emer-
gence of Sikh state within the Indian Union in 1966 and the current
Sikh demand for a separate home land -- the Khalistan.[12]

The Suddhi and Sangathan movements of the 1920s among the Hindus
made the Punjab the home of Hindu consolidation and the provincial
leaders of the Punjab became the chief spokesman for the Hindu cause of
the entire subcontinent. The aim of both these movements was to put
an end to the daily drain from the Hindus, who were being converted
into alien religions in thousands. The most urgent task for the Hindu
Suddhi leaders to bring back to their fold, by reconverting them. The
reconversion of the Muslim Malkan Rajputs in thousands or even lakhs[13]
compelled the Muslims to fortify themselves by the Tabligh and the Tazim
movements. In spite of all the rhetoric the four Hindu-Muslim movements
were defensive movements. It is difficult to judge the success of all
these movements; but the damage done by all these movements in taking
the Hindus and the Muslims apart was beyond repair. Psychologically
these efforts kept the two communities on the alert to the possible
"Aryanization" and the "Islamization" of the subcontinent.

The spread of literacy, and mass media of communication made the
urban areas centers of nationalism and political consciousness. But in
rural areas the surge of nationalism was rather weak. But even in urban
areas political consciousness was confined to the English educated mino-
rity, which was a very microscopic segment of the Indian population.
The peasants of South Asia, largely illiterate retained their tradition-
al allegiance to the village Mukhia (Chief). Political consciousness
and its mobilization process also varied in India from region to region.
The areas that were directly administered by the British had a higher
level of political consciousness and a faster rate of economic develop-
ment than those areas governed by the "native rulers." The British
response to the demands of the Indian national leaders varied according
to time, place and regions. Where the national feelings were weak re-
sponses were weak. But at one stage or the other the growth of Indian
nationalism was marked by constitutional and administrative, social and
religious reforms intended to satisfy or to dilute the rising expecta-
tions of the people; and in particular lowering the ambition of the
individual national or regional leaders. The abolition of the human
sacrifices (Sati, Thugi, and infataside) in the social and religious
sphere and constitutional reforms of 1909, 1919, and 1935 formed a part
of the package of British response to the demands and the aspiration of
the Indians.

While referring to the westernization of India by the British Karl
Marx (1818-1883) wrote in 1853 that England "has broken down the entire
framework of the Indian society, without any symptom of reconstitution
reappearing."[14] It has "a double mission to fulfill ..... one destruc-
tive and the other regenerative the anahilation of the old Asiatic
Society of despotism and the laying material foundations of the Western
society in Asia." "The destructive forces have been set in motion by
imparting political unity, strengthened and perpetuated by electric
telegraph; by introducing the first free press in Asia, a new and power-

The process of westernization also led to the emergence of new classes and elites who spearheaded the social and religious revitalized movements.[6] Along with them, each community in India began to search for self-esteem and cultural identity, which, however, was not an unmixed blessing. The search for cultural identity, valuable as it may have been in rousing hatred against colonial rule, did help to foster divisive trends in the Indian society. The major communities of India (Hindu, Muslims, and Sikhs) then began to draw their own heroes, prize their own myths and traditions and see in their own culture ingredents of nationhood. To make matters worse the heroes of one community became the villians of another; and the golden age of one became the darkest period of another. Thus, in the course of time two nation theory developed, which inflicted such a severe wound in the subcontinent that was never healed. As the wave of westernization engulfed the Indo-subcontinent the Muslims were not only the community to develop the concept of nationhood. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Sikhs of India also felt that they were not Hindus; but a separate nation by themselves with a distinct language, script, religion, and culture -- in short possessing a civilization of its own.[7] The Sikhs, however, did share some of the cultural traditions with the Hindus (both believe in the sanctity of the cow, pipal and tulsi) so they did not go to the extent of carving out a separate state for themselves during the British rule in India. But they did manage to create a separate state for themselves in the Indian Union in 1966.[8]

The 1920s saw the institutionalization of the concept of "nationhood" among the three major communities of India. The inauguration of the Gurdwara movement among the Sikhs, the Suddhi and Sangathan movements among the Hindus and their counterparts, the Tazim and Tabligh among the Muslims took the three communities further and further away from each other. Three factors provided an atmosphere conducive to these movements. The prominence received by religious leaders in national politics during the Non-Cooperation Khilafat days, the presence of strong communal organizations that were able to fill the void created by the sudden suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement and the implementation of the Montagu reforms which made the consolidation of numerical strength imperative among every country.[9] Democracy became synonymous with majority rule. What appeared to be the flood of Hindu-Muslim unity during the Non-Cooperation days proved only to be skin-deep, and the flood subsided only "to expose more noticeably the divergent religious prejudice."[10] The three major communities in the Punjab began to consolidate their positions and in doing so emerged as the protectors of the Hindu, Muslim, and the Sikh interest in the entire subcontinent.

The identity crisis among the Sikhs after the British takeover of the Punjab in the nineteenth century as reflected in the popular slogan like "Ham Hindu Nahin Hain" or in other words "we are not Hindus,"[11] and the Singh Sabha movements, which matured into the Gurdwara movement of the 1920s. The aim of all these movements taken together was to strengthen the desire of the Sikh community to stand as one nation against the political domination by the Muslims and the cultural absorption by the Hindus. The greatest gain by the Sikh community was the

"bloody nonsense", and in the process completely alienated from their
parent civilization. English education did in the beginning tend to
change the taste and behaviour of the Indian students, thereby increas-
ing the distance between the educated elites and the rest of the popula-
tion - a distance that was already formidable due to the presence of the
stratified caste hierarchy. The new English curriculum left many gra-
duates illsuited to enter into the wider Indian society. Instead, the
English educated elites of the Indian society formed a new caste or
class of its own looking down upon their fellow-citizens. Many regarded
English literature and language, English political institutions, and
English concepts of beauty as their ideals and norms. Implicitly, and
explicitly they slighted their Indian culture. Some of them even viewed
their own society and heritage with ambivalence or worse.[3] This group
of Indians, though were quite large in number, yet, produced no leader
of national or provincial repute.

A second group rejected completely the wave of westernization or
the secularization process. The father of this movement was the mystic
ascetic Swami Ram Krishna Paramhamsa, whose chief spokesman was Narendra
Nath Datta (1863-1902), better known as Swami Vivekananda. He refused
to be blown by the new wind that was coming from the West. He sincerely
believed in the traditional wisdom of India, which in his opinion, was
perfectly capable of guiding the destiny of modern India.[4] A third group
made a compromise between Eastern and Western values; and in this harmony
and synthesis they visualize the solid base for future India. This was
the most influencial section of the Indian elites and among them included
towering personalities like Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833), Swami Daya-
nanda Saraswati (1824-1883), Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948), Moti Lal Nehru
(1861-1931) and his son Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964). They took whatever
was good in the Western tradition and modified it into the Indian system.[5]

It must, however, be pointed out that Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the
Brahama Samaj, Swami Dayananda Saraswati and the Arya Samaj, Swami Viveka-
nanda and the Ram Krishna Mission had one thing in common. They all at-
tacked caste system, contemporary religious practises and appealed their
fellow brethren to the nobler traditions of the Indian culture. Some of
them like Swami Dayananda and Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920), even went
to the extent of saying that the traditional forces were not contradic-
tory to the secular forces. In fact, they were mutually compatible and
could supplement each others growth and development. Both of them asked
the Indians not to be awed by the might of British power, for, India had
a long history of fighting against foreign aggressors and a day would
come when India would be emancipated from colonial rule.

Paradoxically, the process of Westernization also brought a revolt
against India's past. The Hindu, Sikh and Muslim reformers of the sub-
continent increasingly felt that their social and religious institutions
had ceased to be dynamic. Thus, in an effort to preserve the good and
beautiful of the historical past they made an attempt to remove the veil
of fog and distortions that had enveloped their social and religious
systems. In short, they looked upon the past as in a mirror and began
to extract the useful traditions and phenomena they could use and leave
the obscure, corrupt, and rotten ideas and practises behind.

Impact of Westernization in the Historical Development of India

Prem Raman Uprety

The term westernization and modernization is often used synonymously in our times for to be modernize has virtually come to mean the act of walking on the path of development that is being pursued by the West. It is the liberating spirit of democracy that constitutes one of the moving forces modernity. Another powerful force is that of science. In recent years it has fathered the technological revolution that is rapidly transforming the world.[1] However in the ancient had medieval periods India, China and the Middle East were the centers of modernity; and for a country to be modernized was to acquire "the moving spirit of the East." But by the year 1600 A.D. the seesaw began to tilt in favour of the West. In the West the seventeenth century was an age of genius.[2] The modern world was born in the minds of intellectual luminaries like Galilei (1564-1642), William Harvey (1578-1657), Isaac Newton (1642-1727), Johann Kepler (1571-1630), and Rene Descartes (1596-1650).

Today, westernization or modernization, whichever expression one would like to use, has become a world phenomenon. The twin forces of westernization and modernization created a revolution in British India. This, however, does not mean that the forces of westernization created a revolution against itself; yet, the movement released such powerful and dynamic economic and political concepts that it served as a catalyst to a series of revolutionary process – a process that brought a renaissance among the diverse segments of Indian population. It turned the wheel of social and religious reforms, and revitalized movements, which culminated into a revolt against the Raj. The surge of Indian nationalism, which ended in the revolt against the colonial government was the most important symptom of the effects of westernization.

The colonial situation was very conducive to the growth of modernization process in India; and its impact was seen in the diverse segments of the Indian society itself. The Indians reacted three different ways to the new sets of changes brought about by the modernization process. One group accepted the forces of westernization in totality. In fact, we see in them a complete metamorphosis as exhibited in their changed life style, food habits, and their social and religious outlook. As the western values went into their veins they even changed their names and became Christians. Some in their euphoria of being emancipated from the "bondage of Hindu culture", labeled their traditional culture as

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ful agent of reconstruction."[15] He further observes that the railroads,
along with the multiplication of roads would destroy the village isola-
tion and its accompanying "self-intertia". Again modern industry "will
dissolve the heriditary division of labour upon which rest the Indian
caste system, those decisive impediments to Indian progress.[16]

But the Indian social and religious system had attained such a de-
gree of maturity and sophistication that it refused to be blown by the
wind of westernization as Marx had predicted. Political man in India
even today is made of traditional materials. Acting through caste asso-
ciations and federations he is capable at various levels to pursue power
and authority and calculate his political advantage. The parties help
to strengthen the group alliances and associations. "The result has
been to make representative democracy meaningful and effective in a
peasant nation and caste society."[17] The study of caste politics in
India shows a traditional powerful institution like caste has modified
itself according to the needs of a democratic, secular society. The
news head line from Statesman of June 19, 1961, namely, "Caste Hierarchy
Declines As Casteism Rises", sums up the case of modernity of tradition
under the impact of secular forces.

When a traditional society like that of India goes through the
forces of westernization or modernization or secularization, whatever
expression one would like to use, three things can happen:

   i.   the system of government may adjust according to the social
         order and reject the forces of secularization;

  ii.   the social orders may change itself according to the wishes
         of the government; and

 iii.   both the society and the government may compromise their ideals
         and will reach a tolerable degree of consistency.

In her march towards modernization or secularization India in future
will evolve a compromise between traditional and secular principles. The
forces of secularization are too powerful for the Indian society to
ignore completely, yet, the tradition is so deeply rooted in the Indian
society that it is not possible to blow it out by a powerful wind from
the West. It is neither possible for the Indian society to destroy the
thousand years of tradition through a stroke of legislation nor is it
possible for her to remain aloof from the secular culture on which man's
civilization today is based. India today is experimenting a secular
western culture in a country where the Hindus are the majority. So some
may even conclude India will one day abandon the concept of secularism.
But if we take into consideration the sizeable minorities like the Mus-
lims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists and Parsis, as well as the diversity
and complexity in the Hindu society itself it is difficult anticipate
the abandonment by India the concept of secularism in future. It is
most likely that India will evolve a compromise between secularism and
traditional Hinduism and thereby evolve its own type of secularism or
modernism.

Footnotes

1. More on the concept of modernity see Samuel H. Beer, Modern Political Development (New York: Random House, 1974), pp. 94-125.

2. A. Whitehead, Science and Modern World (New York: Mentor Books, 1980).

3. John McLane, The Political Awakening of India (Englewood Cliffs, 1970), pp. 5-85.

4. Vivekananda, Inspired Talks, My Master and Other Writings (New York: Ram Krishna-Vivekananda Center of New York, 1939); Yogeshwarananda, The Life of Swami Vivekananda (Almora: Advait Ashram, 1949).

5. D. Mackenzie Brown, The White Umbrella: The Indian Political Thought from Many to Gandhi (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).

6. Perhaps, the best account of revitalized movements, in particular the Arya Samaj is found in Williams K. Jones, "The Arya Samaj in the Punjab: A Study in Social Reformation and Religious Revivalism, 1877-1902", unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, 1966.

7. Prem R. Uprety, Religion and Politics in the Punjab in the 1920s (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1980), pp. 63-72.

8. More on Sikh Nationalism see Teja Singh, Sikhism: Its Ideals and Institutions (Bombay: Orient Longmans, 1962), pp. 56-74; Gokul Chand Narang, Transformation of Sikhism (New Delhi: New Book Society of India, 1960), pp. 28-33.

9. Ibid., p. 63.

10. Correspondence between American Council, Karachi and U.S. Department of State (International Affairs of Burma and India), August 8, 1923.

11. A Booklet in Punjabi by Kahan Singh; background see Norman G. Barrier, The Sikhs and Their Literature (Delhi: Manohar Book Service, 1970), pp. XVI I-XV.

12. See L.S. Rathore, "The Problem of Khalistan", in S.A. Haqqi (ed.), Democracy, Pluralism and Nation Building (New Delhi: N.B.O. Publications, 1984), pp. 280-94; R. Kaur, Gopal Singh "Politics of Sikh Home Land", Ibid., pp. 295-324.

13. S.R. Sharma, Mahatma Hamsa Raj: The Maker of Modern Punjab (Lahore: Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha, 1941), p. 120; R.S. Tiwari, Swami Shraddhnanda (Ajmer: Diamond Jubilee Press, 1927), p. 10.

14. Karl Marx, Selected Works, Vol. VI, "The British Rule in India" (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1975), p. 652.

15. Ibid., 658.

16. Ibid., 658-660.

17. Lloyad I. Rudalf, "The Modernity of Tradition: Democratic Incarnation of Caste in India", Political Science Review, 1965, p. 985.