RELIGION, IDENTITY AND CULTURAL CHANGE: SOME THEMES FROM NINETEENTH CENTURY INDIA

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the psycho-cultural dynamics of the interaction between the British community in India in the 19th century and the class of Indians educated in the English school system both in terms of the stress the encounter placed upon individuals of both cultural communities and the response initiated thereby. Although the emphasis of the study is on the impact of Western values and attitudes it is recognized that the source of psychological stress for Indians was the response of the British to the stress of contact with an alien culture.

The cultural change induced by the British in India focused upon the Hindu religion, requiring a deep rearrangement of cultural values, motivations and their corresponding institutional structures. But it is seen that this kind of change is not easily accomplished. Indians could not reject their own cultural values and accept the alien ones without destroying their sense of identity which, being derived from the Hindu religion, was incompatible with the value system of the West. Though intellectually they identified with some values and ideas of the West, emotionally and socially they were tied to the culture patterns of traditional Hinduism. This conflict caused some Indians to experience a crisis of identity. In this thesis identity is defined as a function of religion. The religious system of a culture forms the matrix of all cultural values, beliefs, attitudes, and the sense of identity and serves as the organizing, integrating, and stabilizing principle of the social system and the personality. A crisis of identity becomes for the individual a crisis of belief. This was what occurred when the cultural values and beliefs of the Hindus were challenged by the alternate value system of the British which, when defined
by the racist ideology and the colonial relationship, destroyed the sense of security and integrity of the native personality.

British cultural attitudes are discussed in terms of the changing images of India and of Indians in the 19th century and interpreted in the context of the ideologies that inspired them. It is observed that the images of 19th century Indian culture are uniformly condemning but that the images of India's past and future vary according to the ideological stance of the image makers. The cultural attitude which prevailed throughout most of the century was one of intolerance stemming from the belief in the superiority of the British culture. This attitude created an atmosphere of cultural polarity and manifested itself in an invidious comparison between the two cultural groups.

A framework is established for interpreting the Indian response to the impact of British cultural attitudes or, rather, to the crisis of identity and the loss of self-respect that the impact produced. The response was basically a defensive one. It involved a search for a new cultural identity which would relieve the stress of commitment to opposing value systems by effecting a compromise. Indians attempted this realignment via cultural historiography or cultural classicism, a process whereby they interjected 19th century Western values into their own cultural past thereby making those values seem generic to their tradition. Historiography "proved" that present (19th century) moribund values represented a deviation from the true values of the Hindu religion. This interpretive act rendered adjustment to and acceptance of change easier. It produced a cultural identity compatible with the experience of the contemporary Indian and provided a framework for the interpretation of traditional
Hinduism according to the 19th century world view. The reinterpreative schemes of Raja Rammohun Roy and Swami Vivekananda are used to illustrate the Indian response. Their images of India and of Indians are contained in the "myths" of the Indian Golden Age and Indian spirituality which were calculated to regenerate India and Indians to a position of dignity and equality in a world culture.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I. THE BASIS OF THE BRITISH-INDIA RELATIONSHIP

In 1877 Queen Victoria was proclaimed "Empress of India," thereby giving official recognition to a political fait accompli of twenty years' duration and an economic domination that extended back to the early decades of the century. Through colonial annexation to Britain, India, a traditional, agrarian-based society, emerged from her Himalayan isolation into the world of modern national states. The British plan to gain supremacy in the power struggle of the expanding European states determined India's destiny. Britain needed to build a colonial empire which could provide her workshops with an abundant supply of the raw materials necessary for industrial and economic growth. India played an important role in the creation of a British Empire strong enough to dictate the rules of the game of power. To do this however, India had to undergo a degree of technological processing in order to transform her immense potential into energies utilizable by a modern nation.

The basis of the British-India relationship was economic. The dynamics of the relationship were largely determined by the power differential which permitted the nation with superior technological and military strength to capitalize on its advantage according to its established interests. But modern history attests to the tendency of imperialist activities to generate strong nationalistic feelings amongst the colonized people. It is ironic that the very process whereby a colony is
transformed into a highly productive field of economic gain contributes to the strengthening of those institutions of national life (or potential national life) in the daughter country which make for resistance. We might locate these nuclei that absorb power refracted from the imperialist activities in several areas: in the rising middle class with its new wealth and ambitions; in the class of intellectuals trained in the British schools to appreciate the progressive ideas of Mill and Compte; in the politically active intellectuals inspired by the fervour of Mazzini and Marx; and, finally, in the numerous religious men who encountered the rationalism of the reform movements and feared the iconoclastic, imitative tendencies manifest in the reformers would destroy the only true source of national life: the Hindu religion.

British rule induced cultural change that was unbalanced. It effected a dislocation of social orders, suspending various segments of Indian society in different time zones. At one extreme was an educated elite informed by the modern world while at the other were the Indian masses who still belonged to a world subject to tradition and custom. British policy after 1857 tended to withdraw from any movements towards social reform which might aid in bringing together the fractured segments of Indian society. This had the effect of widening the gap separating the rulers from the ruled, intensifying a cultural estrangement that culminated towards the end of the century in a racially entrenched alienation. The foreign government, concerned only with those measures required to transform India into a useful member of the British Empire, concentrated upon creating a strong, centralized, political organization.

Coupled with complex developments in international politics in the
latter part of the 19th century that left the British concerned about maintaining their tenuous supremacy, the disquiet among the natives of India precipitated an anxiety syndrome leading to a radical alteration in the cultural policy of the British in India. Early 19th century imperialism, espousing the doctrine of sacred trusteeship, sanctioned its activities. However, by mid-century much of the progressive idealism that mobilized that era had dissipated in magnificent efforts effecting no startling results. The Mutiny of 1857 stood as a symbol of that failure. When, the following year, the British Crown wrested control of the subcontinent from the East India Company, a reversal was underway. The determination of Britain to settle permanently in India countervailed the ideals of the forefathers, namely, that India would soon become a self-governing, sovereign state. Ideas had changed. Social Darwinism lent "scientific proof" to the doctrine of the superiority of some racial groups over others. It was no longer believed India could become a civilized equal of the British.

II. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHOD

This abbreviated account of the basis of the British-India relationship serves to introduce a broader process of cultural interaction which forms a superstructure above the economic base. The dynamics of this process are so inter-connected it seems impossible to isolate factors which were monocausally determinative. We tend to give names to the larger event — Imperialism, Modernization, Westernization, Renaissance — and attempt to describe the process in terms of its dominant motif. It was, for example, an economic enterprise stimulated by the demands of
industrialization, a process which may be mapped out in terms of the capitalistic supply-demand formula. Or, it can be viewed as a revitalization movement, that is, an encounter generating a deep rearrangement of cultural values and beliefs. Or, it can be seen as a nationalist movement, which transformed the traditional world of primordial ties into the modern world where authority is invested in the nation and its leaders. Numerous perspectives are possible for this multi-dimensional process is amenable to no simple definition. Certainly we are dealing here with a situation which has presented a challenge to both cultural communities, engendering a two-way impact-response between them. It is difficult to be definitive about the specific nature of the challenge as it seems to be too inclusive a force to admit precise delineation. It has been noted already, political involvement motivated by mercenary interests seemed to be the prevalent official concern, and the British policy in India reflected this orientation in social and political reforms designed to remove impediments to the achievement of efficient control. But the encounter of importance to this study is located where communities and individuals may be identified. The British officials did not exist in abstracto in India. They formed a community with a very special personality characterized by what has been called an "exile mentality." Furthermore, they represented a certain class of Britishers united by a common educational background and strong endogamous ties (this latter being applicable only until about 1840). In their governing role and life style they represent the "impact" side of the model, but they were also affected by their contact with the alien environment. Hence, a "response" which must be gauged. On the part of the Indian community involved directly with the
British, what is important is the gradual awakening of this predominantly high-caste, traditionally literate group to the ideals and philosophies of the West, to the history and traditions of their own people, and to the reality of the colonial relationship, all of which introduced them to the staggering nature of the Western alternative. The challenge was diffused, affecting differently people of diverse orientations. It created a climate of ferment which led people of similar inclinations to band together into organizations designed to secure at least a temporary stability amidst a flux of changes too rapid and too radical to be assimilated. All these responses are important. Some, however, play a more formative role in the dynamics of change than others. The mainstream of response followed a course of intellectual ferment manifestly urban and secular, though of equal importance was an undercurrent of religious tradition which exerted a strong authoritative influence on all incipient change.

The richness of detail characterizing this "architecture of responses" must not be ignored in the search to understand the more concrete features of this encounter. In magnifying the subtle psychological aspects of the situation and illuminating their inner dynamics, as I propose to do in this thesis, it will be discovered that, although they may not be determinative, they are vital elements in the dynamics of the encounter.

In choosing to pursue this line of psycho-cultural analysis, the aim will be to analyze the sources of psychological stress, to determine how such stress affected individuals and to examine how individuals dealt with the stress. Inherent in this type of perspective is the danger of
failing to distinguish the grander sweep of events which suggest more concretely the "how" and "why" of that span of history, from the subjective elements of psychological stress and identity crisis. The narrowness of the endeavour justifies itself only if one subscribes to the view that analysis of the whole cannot be complete if it ignores the segment of encounter affecting cultural values, especially when those values are enshrined in a religious tradition intricately interwoven into the fabric of social life.
I. INTRODUCTION

In large sectors of Indian society today, notably in the populous rural areas, a traditional way of life still prevails, relatively untouched by the incipient modernity of the sprawling urban centers. Over a century ago India, both inspired and coerced by the power of the British nation, began the long process of transformation into a modern state. Today she is still in the transitional stage, unable to effect the metamorphosis into modernity. The obstacles which she has encountered encompass all the expected economic and political problems of a new nation committed to economic development. One hindrance has proved most obstructive of the desired progress. Derived in large part from the above factors, it may be described as a socio-cultural one. India is an old society. The weight of her ancient traditions have lent a massiveness to the values, attitudes and beliefs supporting her traditional social organization. Her religion has formed a firm cultural matrix which has served to define the goals and expectations of the group and, correspondingly, of the individual. Through the varnāśrama system and the sanātana dharma scheme these values and goals have been integrated into both the organizational and the institutional structures of Indian society. While her value system reflected a traditional world view not familiar with the doctrine of progress (but not necessarily totally contradictory to it), India's social order, the institutionalized form of those values, was
firmly established in that premodern framework. It is not easy to effect a change in the ideological system of a culture, to convince individuals to forsake their values and beliefs and accept those of others. But it is even more difficult, once this change has been made, to reorganize the concrete structural manifestations of the particular system which forms the basis of the social order. And yet this latter change is imperative.

It is incumbent upon a modernizing society to effect deep rearrangements of those cultural factors belonging not only to the "ideological-motivational" order but also to the "institutional-organizational" order. In India, the essential alterations were slow to occur, and even when they were achieved they were restricted to a very small segment of the society, namely, the educated elite. This group was modernized, but only in a limited sense and only at the expense of alienation from the larger cultural group. This latter group, while struggling to understand the radical changes demanded of them tended to recoil in fear and take an even tighter hold on what was familiar. In a transitional society such as this the value systems of the traditional and the modern world coexist uncomfortably and neither obtains for the individual a satisfactory resolution to the problem of adjustment amidst rapid change. To whom should one be loyal? With what ideals should one identify? By what standard is one to judge behaviour? These are essential questions demanding definite answers, and the two value systems do not offer the same answers.

In transitional societies, the province of religion tends to be severely limited to its transcendent principles. The details of social activity change rapidly — details which used to be understood as
meaningful because an integral relationship mediated by a system of values was formed between broad religious principles and social activity. When, as in the case of India, disjunction occurred between the meaning system and the action system, then some individuals caught in the change experienced a crisis in identity. Meaning, value and motivation had no contact with the new reality and therefore lost their relevance. The parallel structure built into the scheme of legitimations was destroyed. Yeats' lyric phrases aptly summarize the debilitating effects of radical change on society and the individual: "Things fall apart; The center cannot hold; ...The best lack all conviction, while the worst / Are full of passionate intensity."  

The object of this chapter is to explore the nature of personal identity: how it originates, what it consists of, how it functions, how it is preserved and how it is destroyed. Since the issue at hand is primarily concerned with the operation of the latter two aspects in the changing phases of 19th century Indian society, the chapter will incorporate data from sociological, anthropological and historical studies in its examination of personal identity in traditional, transitional and colonial Indian society. The perspectives these three disciplines offer can be utilized to organize the complicated mass of data existing on the subject of personal identity and social change.

The India of the period in question confronts the investigator in its Trimūrti form: traditional Hindu society represents its preserving aspect, the encounter with the ideas and materials of the western world represents its creative, innovative aspect, while India's participation in the colonial relationship represents the destructive aspect.
II. INDIA AS A TRADITIONAL SOCIETY: RELIGION, IDENTITY AND
PRIMORDIAL TIES

In this discussion of India as a traditional society the emphasis
will be placed upon those elements of traditional social organization
which relate directly to the formation of individual identity. It must
be pointed out immediately, though, that it is not possible to speak of
the traditional India as if it were a monolithic structure. Like any of
the traditional societies associated with the historic religions it had
its share of challenging heterodoxies, sub-cultures and folk religions --
all the "little traditions" so typical of the diversity of Indian life.
Nevertheless, India participated in that special feature of traditional
societies in that she had an established orthodox value system. Because
it adequately explained and justified to the individual the relevance of
the existing social system, it maintained an authoritative influence over
the widest sectors of society. Each individual knew, indisputably, who
he was, where he belonged and what was expected of him. On account of
this widespread adherence to a particular set of religious symbols it is
possible to speak, in a general way, of the existence of a traditional
Indian society.

Since basic value judgements constitute the organizing principle of
the social system and of the personality,\textsuperscript{5} and because the value system of
a traditional society is governed by the religious system, the religious
element is seen to be fundamental to personal identity. Its position as
the matrix of all cultural values or, as Robert Bellah has termed it, the
"highest cybernetic control mechanism in a society or personality,\textsuperscript{6}"
endows it with the integrative capacity essential to the formation of a
stable sense of identity. By making reference to an ultimate set of values or truths, the historic religions presented to the individual a set of definitions encompassing the world and one's place in it, the purpose of life and one's destiny in it. In India, *karma*, the universal, iron-fisted law of just reward for all deeds done, and *dharma*, the principle of duty and right action governing not only the individual but society and the natural world as well, when taken together, form the basis of the ideological and the social order. The law of *karma* explains to the individual how he has come to be the person he is -- born into a particular family and perhaps endowed with some abilities but not others. It also provides him with a basis for interpreting the events which have shaped his life. Although his future is not entirely within his control (since the effects of some of his previous deeds have yet to bear their fruits), still the individual knows that by following the prescriptions and avoiding the proscriptions of his dharma (*svadharma*) he will obtain much good in this life and assure himself of a store of merit in his next life.

The definitions of reality given by traditional Hinduism communicate to the individual an all-pervasive sense of order and meaning, a stable ground upon which he may depend and proceed to interpret his experiences upon. This is the identity function of a religion. It operates in a society through the process of socialization wherein its particular definitions are institutionalized along with the motivations and skills consonant with those basic value judgements, beliefs and attitudes.

In traditional societies such as India, there exists a strong continuity between basic socialization whereby a child is inducted into
society by learning its values, patterns of association, skills and motivations, and secondary socialization where the acquired values and skills are put to the test of usefulness in the adult world. Here the sense of meaning and purpose internalized in childhood as the "true reality" is not contradicted by the mature person reflecting upon his life and seeking a place for himself in the adult world. This strong sense of continuity absolves doubt and acts as an integrative force in the process of identity formation. Arising out of the cultural religious matrix it operates to help the individual discover for himself, as Eric Erickson has put it, "Some central perspective and direction, some working unity, out of the effective remnants of his childhood and the hopes of the anticipated adulthood...." In this sense, then, personal identity is rooted in those cultural factors -- values, beliefs and attitudes -- constituting the province of religion in traditional societies.

The sense of self experienced in traditional societies has a quality of tenacity not shared by our modern, pluralistic societies. This is due in part to an effective social concensus, the absence of external threat to the stability of the society and the natural resistance to change that characterizes the sense of self-identity. But of special importance to the resilience of personal identity in traditional societies is the intimate correspondence between personal identity and the structures of social organization which support the social system. The characteristic feature of traditional social organization is its primordiality. The network of ties that secure the fabric of society issue from the bonds of blood and kinship, language and religion. In Clifford Geertz's explanation, primordial ties breed a kind of attachment stemming from the
"givens" or the assumed "givens" of social existence. "They have an inef-fable, and at times overpowering, coerciveness in and of themselves.... The power of the "givens'... to shape an individual's notion of who, at bottom, he is and with whom, indissolubly, he belongs is rooted in the non-rational foundations of personality."⁸

In traditional India the strongest primordial tie, the blood relationship, was institutionalized in the system of the extended family. Not only was the family the most basic unit of social organization but it was also the most formative one. Although the individual would typically extend his sense of belonging to include his caste group, the rigidity of the ascriptive order with its countless injunctions and taboos, prevented him from identifying with a wider social community.⁹ In the final analysis the individual always returned to his family as the center of loyalty, the source of identity and the ultimate authority. Furthermore, the ideals and principles of conduct (dharma) that determined what an individual's priorities should be, upheld the primacy of familial duty. Thus the intimacy intrinsic to kinship ties was reinforced by sacred justification. The sense of inevitability, of permanence, coincident with such a situation, bred a feeling of naturalness, familiarity, and an inherent meaningfulness in the flow of human existence.

There is a larger social group replete with primordial sentiments which also claimed the allegiance of traditional India. This group was bound together by a feeling of collective identity stemming from a sense of spiritual affinity born of shared values and a common world view. The cultural religious matrix to which such importance was given in identity formation takes on an even greater significance because of its location
in the network of primordial ties. The coerciveness of religious values obtains not merely because they are basic to the socialization process in traditional societies but also because religion is predisposed to primordial intimacy and shares with it those qualities of naturalness and meaningfulness.

III. INDIA AS A TRANSITIONAL SOCIETY: CULTURAL CHANGE AND IDENTITY CRISIS

The term "transitional society" is used to denote a society that is in transit between a traditional form of social organization characterized by the primordial ties discussed above and a modern secular state that divests these ties of their absolute authority over the individual. In its place it substitutes allegiance to a sense of national identity which becomes the new context wherein the individual is to discover a sense of personal identity. The transition is from primordial to civil ties, from the personal and the "natural" to the impersonal and the social, the latter being not so much "unnatural" as it is a highly learned form of social behaviour. The movement is away from a religious orientation to life which depends for its acceptance on an attitude of faith, and towards a secular view of human existence which adheres to rational principles. Modernization, then, demands a leap rather than a step. The modern secular state is a radical departure from traditional society for it insists that not only must traditional cultural values undergo a deep rearrangement but also the motivations operating within the religious value system must be similarly manipulated into the service of the civil order to create radical new functions for those values. There are three steps involved here: the reordering of the value system, the
alignment of new values with new functions, and the mobilization of the motivational forces within the individual towards the new goals. In large part, this requires what Shils calls "the dispersal of charisma ... to the economic field," since the central theme of modernization is economic development.

It is important to note that although many of the skills, values and motivations essential to a modern society had existed for a very long time in the entreprenuerial classes of India, they did not occupy a central position in traditional social concern as they have done in modern societies. That is to say, in the Hindu scheme of Purushārtha, the four goals of life, provision is made for artha, the acquisition of material wealth, and it is given full recognition as a legitimate aim of life. The orientation of artha is secular, but it is tempered by the ideals of selflessness and non-appropriation, ideals which, along with those of other-worldliness and asceticism, are given a much higher value in the total scheme of things than is artha. Furthermore, as Dube and Shils have pointed out, traditional Indian attitudes towards wealth are not conducive to economic development. Surplus capital is typically squandered in excessive displays of wealth, usually in the ceremonial discharge of religious obligations, or it is converted into gold jewellery, a form of safe-keeping which removes its productive power from the economy.

When the alternate value systems of tradition and modernity encounter one another in the transitional society, pressure is exerted upon the traditional system to adapt or become dysfunctional. By the time this conflict is discovered, irreversible processes of change have already been initiated in the economic and political spheres. Change is seen to
be inevitable. Indians were quick to recognize they must have a definite say in determining the direction of change. It was necessary for them to find an expedient means of interpreting the changes in the context of India's own cultural history in order to prevent Westernization from taking control of the modernization process.¹³

Some of the reasons for this xenophobic reaction to Western values have been intimated above. Briefly, change must be meaningful. The changes demanded for modernization acquire meaning only in the context of the modern world view. For the individual who does not comprehend this modern world view, and only realizes he must reject the old, familiar, stable world of his kin or caste group for an unknown world appearing to lack every amenity he presently possesses, change is not only intolerable, it can be terrifying. The individual cannot destroy his old values without destroying his self — his sense of identity, personal as well as social. Anomie is implicit in such a shift. And yet he desires the benefits of technology, the conveniences and luxuries that are the hallmark of modernity and which could never be acquired under his present way of life. The ambiguity of his position is heightened by his fear of being destroyed by the flood of alien imports. The goal of the modernizer is, then, to avoid an absolute break with the past, to effect an alignment with two divergent realities so as to produce something that is not an ideological replica of Protestant capitalism. This culturally-based sense of continuity vital to personal identity must be assiduously sought after and imprinted onto the emerging social consciousness by any means, political, ideological, or, best of all, by astute manipulation of the religious symbol system from the inside, that is, by persons within the religious tradition¹⁴.
A salient feature of transitional societies is the prevalence of pathological identity crises amongst those native people who closely interact with the foreign cultural community. These individuals are usually drawn from the upper classes — Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas — and are the most likely people to engage in activities falling within the jurisdiction of the foreign government. In India, a large percentage of these people received an English education and pursued a career in business, law or government, thereby making financial or political contact with British officials and private businessmen. But these same people had received a very traditional upbringing. Their early socialization had taken place in the context of the extended family and much of what they inherited in terms of attitudes, values, beliefs and a sense of identity did not come from the modern views of their English teachers. Rather, they were the values of the *ayas* (nurses), the aged grandparents and the traditional mothers who took charge of the child's early training. As was mentioned previously, this constellation of cultural factors which constitute a value system and its related motivational and behavioural patterns sustain a natural coerciveness over individuals who have internalized them. They pertain to a reality that imbeds itself in the deepest emotional centers of the individual. It is a reality which is self-evident in its non-rational hold over him and formative in the forging of his sense of self. The kin who act as his teachers still identify with an orthodoxy whose social definition of reality with its over-arching canopy of religious legitimations stands as the most powerful force of personal integrity as well as social cohesion. To them no alternate reality exists.

It is true, however, that most traditional societies, including
India, always sustained an element of plurality at the fringes of their orders. These alternate realities perpetually challenged the establishment and prevented it from fossilizing by forcing it to remain flexible and open to change. But what it is important to note here is there was still a prevailing orthodoxy which commanded the allegiance of the majority and tended to gradually absorb changes rather than to submit to them. What this meant for the individual was a high degree of stability. Events shaping the contours of this type of evolutionary change were rarely felt in one generation. In India this bred a sense of continuity expressed in terms of the ever-expanding nature of time and the eternal regeneration in time of all forms of life.

One's way of life was a part of a dramatic, eternal cycle: it had not changed and there seemed little reason to believe it would or should change. The old people in the family, untouched by the threat of the Western impact, communicated this sense of security and stability to their youngsters who were soon to experience a contemporary scene "littered with fallen idols, desecrated by unsanctioned violence, an uncomfortable place in which to live."

At this point it is necessary to take a closer look at some of the features of modern society and then juxtapose them onto a traditional society. This will bring into focus some of the problems of transition. Pluralism is perhaps the most outstanding characteristic of the modern society. The indisputable "Ultimate Reality" that integrates man, society and the universe is here divested of its absolutism by the coexistence of numerous alternate definitions of reality. Collectively these produce the relativism which prevails in modern societies.
of reality are no longer related to social behaviour except as vestiges of the religious order which have been secularized into an ethical system. Religion tends to become a private concern for the individual. Secular values revolving around an Edenic myth envisioning man in a world where work is minimal and luxury, convenience and comfort are maximal, claim the allegiance of the individual. The ideology is this-worldly and secular and the promise of "health, wealth and happiness" is motivation enough for diligent effort. Because these values pertain to the everyday world of work which is in itself massively real, and because they provide elysian rewards in this world, they tend to mask religious questions. They are values that refer to and exploit a reality which in its gross materiality is so obviously real it obfuscates the subtlety of the religious idea. The values of an individual's private religious life are often discordant with the secular, institutional values governing his social activities. This bifurcation of the sacred and the secular, a process that became assertive in the late Victorian era, forces the individual to "compartmentalize" his world. Cultural relativism often produces in the individual a plurality of selves which can thwart what seems to be a psycho-biological need for integrity and meaningfulness. At least this is the case when individuals try -- as did both the Indian and the Englishman -- to encompass the new world view with the old religious myths. This is not the place to discuss how the religious innovations of modern man have underpinned his loss of faith. (The Victorians sensed this loss and barricaded themselves behind a cult of ethics to avoid facing it.) Suffice it to say that he has attempted to re-sacralize the profane condition of modern material man, to re-cycle himself into the
cosmos by bestowing on man the responsibility of preserving the world. The "new religions" seek the reintegration of man into the universe and the reinstatement of ultimate meaning to human existence.

Individuals in transitional societies stand wedged between the traditional world of medieval explanations of reality, and a modern world with its scientific explanations of segments of the world, its secular system of social ethics and its newly evolving set of "religious" definitions of reality. The problem is complicated by the fact that most transitional societies are non-Christian and therefore their old religious ideas and values are even farther removed from the modern world view. The latter has drawn much of its strength from its own sense of continuity with a Protestant past imbued with the dynamic, innovative spirit of the Renaissance and the Reformation. Change in the transitional society is, therefore, associated with the foreign. Furthermore, it marches forward in defiance of the old laws of gradual assimilation, invading the country on communication lines, legislative bills and military operations -- all the punctual accoutrements of a technological society. Finally, it allies itself with Evangelical Christianity and presents itself as an ideological imperative: intolerant of the past, impatient with the present and dogmatically assured of future progress. This kind of change is violent. It makes impossible demands upon the individual to alter his values, his goals and, finally, his sense of self. It thrusts insecurity upon him because although he also may be impatient with the present, he is emotionally involved with his own cultural past and not nearly as convinced that what will be gained in the future will compensate for the loss of that past.
The general result of this kind of cultural change is a widespread occurrence of pathological identity crises. In sociological terms, this crisis may be defined as a state of psychological conflict experienced when severe disjunction occurs between primary and secondary socialization. In such circumstances the ingredients of personal identity become like oil and water — they refuse to combine. This identity, which is a dynamic point between a relevant past and an anticipated future, loses its energy: the past is no longer relevant and the future is uncertain.

As was noted previously, the people most afflicted by this kind of psychological stress were those Indians who, through their knowledge of English, developed economic ties (often dependent ones) with the British. The historical context of the British-Indian encounter adds another important dimension to the nature of the identity crisis which has hitherto been discussed. This is the third of the three faces of 19th century Indian: her colonial status. Ushered in by the "New Imperialism," colonialism in India proved to be psychologically destructive for Indians. It is this aspect which is to be discussed below.

IV. INDIA AS A COLONIAL SOCIETY

Perhaps the most important psychological fact of colonization is the degradation of the ruled people. In a sense the allocation of superior-inferior status is inherent in a situation where a foreign people govern a native population. It stems from a natural inclination, perhaps it may even be called a psychological imperative, to consider one's own group and one's own beliefs to be true and therefore "the best." But late 19th century colonialism created a unique ideology, namely its
pseudo-scientific racism, the psychological effects of which were qualitatively different from similar examples of political domination in pre-modern times. The racist ideology achieved ascendancy in the latter part of the century and was due to a specific configuration of historical circumstances which were formative in establishing the tone of the colonial mentality. In Europe, England and America in the decades following the 1860's, such widespread changes occurred in all areas of human existence that there is considerable justification for saying a new "modern" frame of mind had emerged.

Since the concern in this paper is with both the prevailing attitudes of the British officials in India and with the Indian's response to them, and since both of these are a function of an encounter between two very different cultural communities, the details of the encounter situation must be examined more closely. It must be noted that one cannot speak of a monolithic orthodoxy with respect to British attitudes towards Indians. However, the end of the 19th century did witness a greater consensus of opinion which favoured a more negative attitude towards Indians than had previously been the case. Although it may seem unjust to exclude here the praise which some Britishers bestowed upon Indians, there seems to be sufficient evidence that it was the negative attitudes of the Britishers, their aloof, condescending and denigrating posture towards them, which carried the force of the degradation Indians felt so keenly. This degradation had such a psychologically debilitating effect that many Indians began to fear the Britishers might be right in their estimates of Indian character. Lucien Pye, in his book, Politics, Personality and Nation Building, speaks about "the haunting fears of
failure ... the disturbing doubts about the worth of the self, felt by the leaders of the newly developing countries. This is the legacy of the colonial situation. It is worth quoting more fully Pye's perceptive analysis:

The seeds of such doubts were, of course, planted by the mechanics of colonialism, which inescapably cast one people in the role of inferior. Moreover, the master peoples usually drove the point home with permanent effect by employing either consciously or unconsciously all the thousand and one techniques and tricks by which most elites throughout time have sought to demonstrate their natural rights of mastery and to unnerve and demoralize the common people. ... The colonialists' casual but ceaseless stress on class, on style, on form and above all their inflexible self-assurance, even when dead wrong, has left whole generations of aspiring leaders with incipient doubts as to their own ability to rule.

In trying to locate the sources of identity crisis it is necessary to look not only at the kinds of radical changes up-ending Indian society, but also at the nature of the relationship between Britishers and Indians, at the images Britishers had of themselves, of India and of Indians, and at their objectives, both private and social, for remaining in India (which most of them disliked intensely). In other words, their attitudes must be analyzed in psycho-cultural terms. Similarly, it must be discovered why Indians were so impressed by the Britishers' images of them, why they were so anxious to appear in a favourable light before the Englishman and why they were so distressed to receive harsh criticism from them.

O. Mannoni in his book, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*, has made an intriguing analysis of the relationship between colonial powers and native peoples in terms of the type of individual who becomes a colonialist. Although his study deals
specifically with the French in Madagascar, his observations have a general applicability and prove helpful in this analysis of the British in India. The central theme of his work is that the essence of the colonial mentality is a passionate concern for obtaining status. Using as classic examples Shakespeare's Prospero and Caliban (*Twelfth Night*) and Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Friday, Mannoni discerns a very specific sort of personality filling the role of the dominating figure. He is one who is not only in a relatively inferior social position at home, but is also chagrined by his insignificance. Desiring the power, authority and stature which stems from being someone important (or at least feeling that one is significant), and obsessed with the idea that one's true identity is to be found only in the acquisition of such a position, he goes to the colony. There he finds a ready-made superiority and, because he has the right skin colour and speaks the right language, the highest status is automatically bestowed upon him. Equality is not a factor here; neither is competition. Special abilities and skills, both social and natural, which are essential for success at home are not required in the colony. He is regarded by an entire population of native people as their master and ruler. He becomes an elite, an aristocrat.

Because the colonialist, who is typically of a middle-class background, thrives on power, feels the surge of self-confidence in *being* someone, he grows to fit his exalted image of his own self-importance and becomes highly susceptible to abusing the authority he has gained. He is one to perpetuate the inequality between the rulers and the ruled because the polarity of superior-inferior is essential to his self-image.

Mannoni is careful to point out that not all individuals who go to
the colony are necessarily outcastes or the black sheep of the family.  

But the point he does stress is that there is a bit of the colonialist latent in everyone and it surfaces almost inevitably in the colonial situation. John Morearty adds to this picture of the colonialist personality the element of do-goodism which can be seen especially in the missionary type. He notes how some "not infrequently had ... a profound and sincere desire to do good for the Indians, to bear the White Man's Burden (whether to carry out the demands of a "doctrine of civilization," to compensate for their own inferiority complexes, or to rationalize the unwitting sadomasochistic tendencies which had attracted them to the colonial situation)."

Hand in hand with the "elitist mentality" of the colonialist goes the "exile mentality" which has its roots in the mythology of the Nabobs. These middle-class entrepreneurs came to India early in the century and, in a short period of time, succeeded in amassing a tremendous fortune. They returned to England armed with this powerful commodity and successfully gained entrance into aristocratic circles. They purchased country estates, the highest symbol of gentility, and lived a life of carefree leisure at the pinnacle of the social pyramid, far removed from the fatigue and drudgery of the working-class people. Popular stories about the lives and adventures of the marvelous Nabobs created what Walter Houghton called the "Bourgeois Dream": retirement into idleness which was the "badge of status" of "a gentleman of independent means." The Victorians regarded work as a moral obligation and as the only means of social improvement. Failure in life was the ultimate humiliation for it indicated a weakness of character and it consigned one to poverty and
shame. Carlyle said: "What is hell? — the terror of not succeeding."  

And yet, despite the ethic of work and the scorn for idleness, the middle-class businessman yearned for the rewards of work — the wealth and the leisure to enjoy life. His curse of the aristocrat stemmed from his envy of their idleness.

By the late 19th century the situation had changed. The Nabob became a hero of the past but his achievement remained to inspire future generations of aspiring social climbers. Massive fortunes could no longer be obtained in India and translated back to England in terms of status: one could make a decent salary for himself in the colony, but one would have to make a career of it. As Hutchins has put it, "Englishmen directed their attention to the rewards of steady service in India rather than to the more elusive ones offered by English society and politics. The ambition of using India as an avenue of advancement in the English social scale was not lost sight of; it was simply transplanted to Indian soil."

The feeling of being in exile which stemmed from this total identification with England acted as a force of gravity knitting together into tight little social enclaves all Britishers who participated in the self-imposed exile. Far removed both physically and spiritually from the reality of the people and culture they were living within, they created from the remnants of their best images of their own culture a stylized, in some sense fossilized replica of that society, maintaining the social rules, patterns and structures which furnished their own minds. This kept their dream of high British society in the forefront of reality and enabled everyone to seriously act out his affected fantasies of nobility. In his *Memoirs of a Bengal Civilian*, John Beames notes how even among "the
middle and lower classes of Europeans in India, everyone ... considered himself a 'Sahib' or gentleman."\(^{31}\)

But an essential requirement for the preservation of the aristocratic posture is that it have a real and present dependency referent: the colonial needs the native in order to support his dominant status. Since the newly acquired gentility is not transferable to the homeland, it must be firmly entrenched in the colony. The native must fulfil the colonialist's passion for status by becoming a willing dependent. The colonial relationship perpetuates this dependency through psychological captivity -- in Mannoni's explanation, it brings into existence the need for dependence.\(^{32}\) A.P. Thornton, in his book, *Doctrines of Imperialism*, has explained this process most succinctly. He says:

> Where, then, two different structures of personality impact upon one another, two things are likely to happen. The native's personality is eroded. The colonialist's personality is intensified. The native's environment has been invaded and therefore his personality, a product of that environment, has also gone down to defeat. Deprived of his cultural terms of reference, he becomes literally a nobody, not only in the invaders eyes but in his own.\(^{33}\)

He sums up the relationship thus:

> What, in essence, is a colonial relationship? It is one in which the captor is held as firmly by the chain as the captive. When the chain is broken, as it now is in this present age of decolonization, he suffers consequences as traumatic.\(^{34}\)

Although both Mannoni and Thornton suggest from the examples of African and Malagasy nationalism that natives also feared being abandoned by the white man once the dominating civilization had captured their allegiance, I do not feel that, in India at least, the situation is quite as clear cut as they want to suggest. Once the paternalistic relationship
has been established and the umbilical cord of white man's rather awesome civilization has fused the two peoples together, there is certainly a strong case for the occurrence of birth trauma when the nationalist response matures. But although some educated Indians did accept the opinions and images which Britishers had of them, namely, that Indians were meant to be a dependent people, that they were naturally, even constitutionally so (proof of this was their excessive obsequiousness, their servile attitude), other Indians refused to acquiesce. These latter ones instigated the movements demanding equality before the law and representative government. They also advocated social reforms which indicates they were not completely immune to the scathing criticisms which the British leveled on Indian social practices. Other Indians of this group responded in exactly the opposite way. They became reactionary, buttressed up everything in Indian culture as good and released storms of invective upon the silver-tongued hypocrisy of the invaders. Although the British tried to ignore this unrest, thinking it to follow the classic pattern of adolescent rebellion against the protective father observed already in Africa and Madagascar, the Indian agitation contained a note of threatening insistence which unsettled the British complacency over their position in India.

Therefore, it would seem that although Indians did feel intensely the eroding effect on their identity -- personal as well as cultural -- as a result of the impact of the colonial encounter, there were some who were not rendered impotent by the imposition of the dependency relationship. They were ambivalent towards the British and although they were chronically affected by pathological identity crises, the weight of their
own tradition could not be overpowered by the invading one. Therefore, it seems necessary to regard the nationalist movement as a true expression of a desire for equality. In the early years of the movement the wish to attain independence was not expressed -- in a real sense it can be said most educated Indians were not unhappy then with the dependency relationship on the political level. They desired the benefits of European civilization and were willing to submit to a teacher-pupil relationship. But the projection of a racist attitude onto this relationship which gave to dependency the rank of human inferiority was not acceptable to the Indian intellect. Against this insult, the pinnacle of degradation, the Indians rebelled.

There is a corollary to the Britishers' cultural insularity in India and their exclusive identification with an idealized, aristocratic British society. This was a total alienation from Indian culture. Contact with Indians was, for many officials, restricted to the menials who served them in their garrisoned quarters. It was possible, according to Hutchins, for an English gentleman to live in India for an extended period of time and never once speak to an educated Indian. It is ironic to note how the "respectable Indians" that Macaulay wanted to create ("a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals, and in intellect ...") did come into existence as the Indian middle-class, and was much despised by the Englishmen of later generations. They came to regard educated Indians not only as unrepresentative of the people of India, but also as curious anomalies to be scorned and ignored. Lord Curzon commented: "Isn't it funny to see them eating with knives and forks?" This contemptuous attitude towards upper-class
Indians combined with the paternalistic attitude towards the Indian masses could hardly create a climate of mutual understanding. Because the Britishers were so preoccupied with being English in every mannerism, in every meticulous detail of conduct and dress, and because their status and therefore their sense of personal identity was derived from this very real world of their imagination, Indian society had to exist outside the narrow perimeters of the English colonial mentality. As Thornton has stated above, the two personalities were mutually exclusive. There was no way an Indian could hope to fathom the curious world of British fastidiousness and propriety. An Englishman could never hope to comprehend a character so antithetical to his own as was the Indian's.

If the above observations on the colonial mentality are correct, then it follows that any incursions of Indian culture on the British mind would pose a severe threat to the reality of their pretentious life style and the all-important sense of self-righteous identity it bestowed on them. In order to prevent such psychological stress, Britishers tended to emphasize their own virtues and define them quite specifically. They did this not only by extolling the worth of their own cultural values -- which were most commendable because they derived from the "only true religion" -- but also by means of an invidious comparison with what had been "observed" about the values stemming from Hinduism and the character they produced. Indians seemed to represent to the Britisher in India everything the ideal Englishman was not and should not be. The Indian represented man's sinful nature. It was therefore justifiable for the British to keep them under firm hand and at arms length. They were dealing with "uncivilized creatures" who were, in Kipling's words,
"half devil, half child," barbaric, cunning and lazy. Thornton has defined this attitude in Freudian terms as the Jekyll-Hyde mentality. Because of the prevailing use by officials of such terms "nigger" and "blackguard" with reference to Indians, and the constant denunciation of Indians as "lascivious" and "effeminate," this "barbarian people" symbolized man's darker, instinctual nature: "The negro, then, is the white man's fear of himself."42

The images of India and of Indians emerging from the Britishers' attitudes had a definite impact on Indians. They stood in awe of the wealth and energy of the British Empire and had a curious fascination for the inscrutable English character. They despised the undisguised arrogance of the British and yet felt a compelling desire to gain their approval. This psychological ambivalence towards the foreigner who displayed such an unreasonable contempt towards Indians and their culture created much stress for the individual and was the basis of his identity crisis. The fact was that British respect was reserved for their own kind and no matter how cultured an Indian may be or with what skill he may affect British mannerisms he was still rejected. Because he could not fully identify with the values of the British, with their excessive overlay of purity, pride and paternalism, nor could he find a relevant sense of identity in the established tradition of his own people, the educated Indian living in the 19th century colonial society felt little sense of continuity with the past and felt quite ineffective with regards to his own future. What he did find, however, in the backwash of British contempt and exclusiveness, was a sense of fellowship, even kinship, with other Indians who had experienced the racial discrimination of the white
society. These were individuals who had been modernized to the extent they felt quite keenly what Clifford Geertz has described as "the demand to exist and have a name." He does not refer here to the narrow sense of primordial identity but to the wider, public — even national — sense of being somebody in the world. This class of people who represented the intellectual strength of India, who felt the effects of the destruction of their tradition-oriented sensibility, were not the type of people to accept humility amidst such contempt.
CHAPTER II. RELIGION, IDENTITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE: THE INDIAN SITUATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

1Taken together, these two concepts encompass the system of social organization according to the hierarchy of caste (varna), the rules of inter-personal relationships (dharma), and the orientation of the individual to worldly life and to the transcendent realm of the sacred (ashrama).


3W. B. Yeats, The Second Coming.

4Trimūrti means "three faced one" and refers to the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Visnu and Shiva who function respectively as Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the universe.


7quoted in Lucien W. Pye, Politics, Personality and Nation Building, 1962, p. 87.


9Dube, p. 53.

10The phrases "deep rearrangement" and "radical new functions" are from Karl Deutsch as quoted in Bellah, p. 170.


12Dube, p. 54 and Shils, op. cit.

13For a good discussion of the distinction made here, see David Kopf, British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance, 1969, pp. 275-280.


15For a good example of the Indian concept of time, see the story entitled "The Parade of Ants," in Heinrich Zimmer, Mythes and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization, 1962, pp. 3-11.


21. Bernard Cohn has made a good analysis of the relationship between attitudes and occupations in British colonial societies. He stresses that there were diverse opinions about Indians and much praise for their character from some quarters. However, he agrees with Hutchins that after 1830 "the British came to view their stay in India as a kind of moral exile and to regard Hindus as "an inferior race, totally different from ourselves in their moral character." This idea of a racial gulf between Indians and British was confirmed and heightened by the Mutiny of 1857." See his article, "The British in Benares: a Nineteenth Century Colonial Society," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. IV, No. 2 (January, 1962), pp. 169-199.


25. Bernard Cohn, however, has noted that, in connection with India, "the often made observation that the civil service provided an occupation for second sons of second sons is probably largely correct." Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 178.

26. John Morearty, "Images of India in Swami Vivekananda and Others: The Indian Golden Age and Indian Spirituality," Diss., Chicago, 1969, p. 44. See also Hutchins, pp. 30-32 and p. 19 where he says: "The Evangelical was ... more inclined to work for the underprivileged, whether heathen Indian or English workingman, than acknowledge their equality as human beings and potential believers. The pious works of Evangelicals were often tinged with condescension; the Evangelicals engaged in more thorough concern with demonstrating their own righteousness than hope for the actual enlightenment and elevation of those who served as object of their endeavours ....".

28 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 192.

29 Ibid., pp. 190-199.

30 Hutchins, p. 107.

31 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 108.

32 Mannoni, p. 85.


34 Ibid., p. 194.

35 Hutchins, p. 190.


37 Hutchins, pp. 102-103.


39 Cohn, p. 187.

40 Quoted in Hutchins, p. 157.

41 See an article by R. C. Majumdar, "Nationalist Historians," in *Social Change, The Colonial Situation*, ed. Immanuel Wallerstein, 1966, pp. 617-630. He says: "The general habit indulged in ... (by the British) ... was to compare the worst features of the Hindus with the best aspects of European culture." p. 621.

42 Hutchins, p. 113.

43 Mannoni, pp. 103-104.

44 Geertz, p. 107.
CHAPTER III

NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITISH ATTITUDES TOWARDS INDIA AND INDIANS

I. INTRODUCTION

The 19th century may be roughly divided into four periods in terms of the kind of cultural attitudes that prevailed amongst the British in India. These divisions are not clear-cut and considerable overlapping occurs. The four attitudes, which may be designated Orientalist, Evangelist, Anglicist and Imperialist, are built upon ideologies that reflect the changing values of 19th century European culture. The Orientalist and the Evangelist approach to cultural encounter, except when they coexisted in the same individual, represented opposing factions in the first three decades of the 19th century. But whereas Orientalism was phased out after 1830, the Evangelist approach coalesced with that of the Anglicist. The latter shaded into Imperialism towards the century's end while Evangelism and Imperialism benefited one another by creating a compromise ideology.

Before dealing with these periods individually and the images of India and of Indians that prevailed in them, it must be noted that if any common denominator existed between the individuals who possessed these various attitudes it was their image of 19th century India. All had different images of India's past and her future, these depending upon the particular set of values held. But, in general, both the Orientalist and the Anglicist -- this latter representing the cultural position of the Evangelist and the Imperialist as well -- felt that present day Indian
culture was degenerate. (Specifically, Orientalists thought Indian culture had degenerated while Anglicists believed that it was degenerate.)

Certain current cultural and religious practices indicated a lack of those moral and ethical principles thought to be basic to the civilized state. Some features of the British image of Indians, particularly of Bengalees with whom the British were in such close contact, were recurring themes throughout the century. The stereotyped image of Indian character crystallized by mid-century invariably dwelt upon his deceitfulness, his indolence, his immorality and his effeminacy. Though the content of the images remained relatively stable, the meaning attached to them by the British underwent much alteration, depending upon whether the image was coupled with a universalist credo or an ethnocentric one, a sectarian bias or a racist ideology. The impact of the image in terms of the psychological stress it created was in the value judgment that it carried, a judgment that attached itself to the past, the present and the future.

II. THE ORIENTALIST IMAGE OF INDIA AND OF INDIANS

The British Orientalists derived inspiration from the cosmopolitan, universalist spirit of the 18th century philosophe. They approached Indian culture and religion with a tolerant attitude free from the cultural polarity that characterized their Anglicist successors. This did not mean they were uncritical of everything that was Indian. On the contrary, their rationalist attitude led them to denounce superstition and narrow-mindedness, inhumanity and intolerance, all of which were found to some degree in 19th century India. But their approach to
cultural encounter was guided by their ideal of tolerance. They were an intellectual elite who were, in Kopf's words, "'classicist' rather than 'progressive' in their historical outlook, cosmopolitan rather than nationalist in their view of other cultures, and rational rather than romantic in their quest for those 'constant and universal principles' that express the unity of human nature." Led by William "Oriental" Jones, they sought to interpret Indian history according to the rennaissance-revitalization model born of the Enlightenment concept of the cyclic pattern of history: India, like the mighty empires of Greece and Rome, once experienced an Age of Gold, a period of high civilization that was followed by a decline and fall into a Dark Age. The regeneration of that ancient Golden Age culture, or at least its dynamic, creative spirit, was thought to be possible and highly desirable.

The Vedic Golden Age

The Orientalists were responsible for rediscovering -- and, in some sense, creating -- India's cultural heritage. As classicists they responded enthusiastically to an ancient literature that was rich and diversified, the hallmarks of a high-culture civilization. Jones referred to the Sanskrit language as "possessing a wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either." He further suggested that "Pythagorean and Plato derived their sublime theories from the same fountain as the sages of India." Jones was the first Orientalist to locate India's Golden Age in the Vedic era (ca. 1500 B.C.). He sketched an image of "a people with a fertile and inventive genius ... that in some early age ... were splendid
in arts and arms, happy in government; wise in legislation, and eminent in various knowledge." He evinced the highest respect for the "Philosophy of the Asiaticks" when he said:

(There are not) ... in any language (the ancient Hebrew always excepted) more pious and sublime addresses to the being of beings, more splendid enumerations of his attributes, or more beautiful descriptions of his visible works, than in Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit ...  

Discerning a poetic and religious genius in the ancient religious literature of India he came to believe that the mystical theology of India and Persia was not only superior to that of the West, but was its actual source:

A figurative mode of expressing the fervour of devotion, or the ardent love of created spirits towards their beneficient creator, has prevailed from time immemorial in Asia; particularly among the Persian theists, both ancient Mushangis and modern Sufis, who seem to have borrowed it from the Indian philosophers of the Vedanta school; and their doctrines are also believed to be the source of that sublime but poetical, theology, which glows and sparkles in the writings of the old Academicks. "Plato travelled into Italy and Egypt," says Claude Fleury, "to learn the theology of the pagans at its fountain head"; its true fountain, however, was neither in Italy nor in Egypt (though considerable streams of it had been conducted thither by Pythagorous and by the family of Misra), but in Persia or India, which the founder of the Italick sect (Pythagorous) had visited with a similar design.

H.T. Colebrooke was responsible for the final form of the Golden Age image of which Jones' writings had been so evocative. It was Colebrooke who "discovered" the monotheistic tradition in Vedic India and proved that idolatry and polytheism were products of much later periods. The usefulness of this kind of information becomes obvious when one recalls the objectives of the Orientalists. They wished to regenerate Indian culture, to restore her original, simple, pure, monotheistic religion and to revitalize the innovative capacities that
were responsible for India's former greatness but which were thought to have been obscured by medieval excrescences. In Colebrooke's words, the way to initiate reform in India towards the desired goals was to "investigate" her history "with the hope of facilitating ameliorations of which they may be found susceptible."¹⁰

The Orientalists established the College of Fort William in Calcutta (1800) to serve as a center of Oriental Studies where Hindus and Britishers could work together for the purpose of mutual assimilation of each other's cultural ideals.¹¹ By this means, a communication line was established between the two cultural communities, Bengali and British, which enabled the forerunners of modernization to introduce new ideas in an institutional setting free from cultural polarity. Basically, these schemes for initiating change were syncretistic, the Orientalists recognizing that the changes they felt to be necessary could only be effected within the structure of India's own value system. So they turned to the Laws of Manu, the Dharma Shastras and even Vedic sruti -- all authoritative religious scriptures -- to convince Indians they had deviated (though not necessarily through any fault of their own),¹² from the true injunctions of their religion. The reason for the present degenerated state of Indian culture was to be found in this deviation.

The Indian pundits who were employed as munshis¹³ at the College responded favourably to the Orientalists as individuals and as scholars. They acquiesced to the method of historical interpretation and comparative analysis engaged in by the Orientalists even though, as Hindus, they were not favourably disposed to the Jones-Colebrooke theory of a Vedic Golden Age since it disparaged any later developments of Hinduism.
as medieval. (This designation carried the implication of degeneracy, of belonging to the Dark Ages of human understanding in the same way that one speaks disparagingly of medieval Christianity.)

H.H. Wilson managed to restore a balance to Orientalist scholarship by delving into that uncharted period of medieval Hinduism that had hitherto been confined to obscurity by avid classicists in search of a Golden Age. With Wilson, then, a new branch of Orientalist research opened up, encompassing the wide expanse of history between the Vedas and the Muslim conquest. Says Kopf:

Wilson's wide-ranging curiosity about the Hindu past and his encouragement of medieval studies endeared him to many members of the Bangali intelligentsia who saw in him a kindred spirit in their evocation of an all-embracing Hindu renaissance.

III. THE EVANGELICAL IMAGE OF INDIA AND OF INDIANS

Except for the rare missionary like William Carey who was able to absorb the cultural attitudes of the Orientalists and thus become "Indianized," the aim of the representatives of the Christian religion who entered India was to "exterminate heathenism in India." Their commitment to the dogmatic assertions of the Christian religion made them look unfavourably upon the possibility of India's past greatness. Consequently, their interpretation of Indian history was diametrically opposed to that of the Orientalists. They were not prepared to admit the possibility of an enlightened civilization existing outside the pale of Judao-Christian influence and so they attempted to minimize the findings of the Orientalists by contending that India borrowed her culture from Greeks, Assyrians, Persians and Babylonians. Says Majumdar, "Wherever
there was the least similarity between Indian and foreign ideas, Indians were taken to be the borrowers. The epics were supposed to be indebted to Homer's works, Indian mathematics, philosophy and astronomy were derived from the Greeks, and even Krishnacult was derived from Christ.  

He also points to the habit of missionaries of comparing the worst features of Indian religion to the best features of Christianity. All that was great in India's past derived from contact with the Greek world while all that was base and barbaric appeared when India cut herself off from this divinely-inspired life-line of civilization. Her present condition was entirely the result of her long adherence to false religion. On the other hand, the future would hold promise should India once again accept inspiration from the Christian religion.

**Images of India**

The missionary images of Indian religion, culture and character have a demonic flavour about them, mainly because Indian religion, the matrix of Indian culture, was pictured as the antithesis of Christianity. William Ward, a Serampore Baptist, offers a typical missionary image, replete with deprecations of everything Hindu:

> Everyone who has been obliged to employ the Hindoos has had the most mortifying proofs that if the vices of lying, deceit, dishonesty, and impurity, can degrade a people, the Hindoos have sunk to the lowest levels of human depravity.

He speaks out strongly against idolatry:

> The manifest effect of idolatry in this country as held up to thousands of Christian spectators, is an immersion into the grossest moral darkness and a universal corruption of manners.

Ward finds the worship of the phallic symbol amongst Indian Shivites especially abhorent:
In the months Voishakhu and Kariku, the Linga is worshipped daily in numerous temples dedicated to this abomination throughout Bengal. It is difficult to restrain one's indignation at the shocking violation of everything decent in this image; nor can it be ground of wonder that a chaste woman, faithful to her husband is scarcely to be found among all the millions of Hindoos, when their very temples are polluted with filthy images, and their acts of worship tend to inflame the mind with licentious ideas.22

The feature of Hinduism that received an inordinate amount of attention from missionaries and civilians alike was its alleged immorality. Abbe Dubois speaks about the "shameless stories of their deities," and says that "it really seems as if most of the religious and civil institutions of India were only invented for the purpose of awakening and exciting passions towards which they already have such a strong tendency."23 Says Wilberforce in 1830: "The Hindu divinities were absolute monsters of lust, injustice, cruelty and wickedness. In short, their religious system is one grand abomination."24 A missionary in Calcutta speaking on the same theme in 1824 said:

We know that the cruelty, deceit, lying and uncleanliness with which the scriptures charge ancient idolators, belong to these amongst whom we dwell. ... these immoralities ... arise out of their religion. The character ascribed to their gods and heroes are exactly according to what we know of their own practice.25

The essence of the Evangelical spirit lay in its conviction about the existence of absolute truths and its belief that Christianity alone communicated these truths. The missionary represented the conservative, ethnocentric element of English society and contended with the relativistic, cosmopolitan ethos of the Orientalist. Though the latter held the upper hand in literate circles, the former wielded its influence
among the Indian masses which they attempted to convert to Christianity.

IV. THE ANGLICIST IMAGE OF INDIA AND OF INDIANS

The year 1830 marked a turning point in the dynamic, innovative cultural encounter fostered by the Orientalists of the British East India Company. The basis of that encounter, as mentioned above, had been a desire to exchange cultural knowledge and to effect certain social changes in India in accordance with the latter's own value system. Orientalists believed that prohibitory tactics or outright coercive methods would, if used, prove to be ineffective means of inducing change. Therefore, their program concentrated on developing a sympathetic relationship with the native intelligentsia who would serve them as "cultural brokers," mediating to the Indian community the modern ideas of the European. By this means it was thought that inhumane practices such as sati, the immolation of a Hindu widow on her husband's funeral pyre, child marriage, and female infanticide would die a quiet, natural death. In explaining why the Anglicists, as the anti-Orientalist faction in the British Government was called, appeared to be so "arrogantly ethnocentric," Kopf points to their belief that "... the process of modernization was organically related in some mysterious way to the British culture pattern ..." which meant for them that "... no real change was possible without radical assimilation to the British style of life." The men who replaced the Orientalists in India in 1830 also replaced the latters' tolerant spirit with this less-than-tolerant attitude.

Thomas Babington Maculay's famous Minute on Education (1835) denouncing the Orientalist philosophy is representative of the new trend
of thought. He accused the Orientalists of promoting the teaching of "false history, false astronomy, false medicine ... and a literature admitted to be of small intrinsic value." Although he rather grudgingly admitted that in "works of the imagination" the Eastern writers could claim considerable merit, yet he stresses that "when it comes to works in which the facts are recorded and general principles investigated, the superiority of the Europeans becomes absolutely immeasurable." He goes on to say:

It is, I believe, no exaggeration to say, that all the historical information that has been collected from all the books written in the Sanscrit language is less valuable than what may be found in the most paltry abridgments used at preparatory school in England. In every branch of physical or moral philosophy, the relative position of the two nations is nearly the same.  

Macaulay, as president of the powerful Committee on Public Education, was a highly influential man. His commitment to English education for India and to the abolition of Oriental studies was instrumental in implementing a new era of Westernization in India: change was to be forced onto the alien system from without.

The theory underlying this approach to cultural encounter is a product of the Utilitarian philosophy that James Stuart Mill professed and that Macaulay imbibed and translated into Anglicism. The distinction here is that Mill believed that man was capable of devising a rational system of laws that would be universally valid. Macaulay adhered to this belief but in him its universalism was blurred by his faith in the Evangelical creed and by his growing chauvinism.

English law, thought to be the answer to all of India's social ills, was called upon by Anglicist administrators to eradicate problems
that were of a social nature. Impelled by this conviction, the first action of the new Anglicist government headed by Lord Bentinck was to abolish sati. This was followed by the effective dissolution of the College of Fort William in 1830. James Fitzjames Stephen, writing in the 1870's represented this legalistic, utilitarian philosophy of the Anglicists when he said:

The establishment of a system of law which regulates the most important part of the daily life of the people constitutes in itself a moral conquest more striking, more durable, and far more solid, than the physical conquest which rendered it possible. It exercises an influence over the minds of the people in many ways comparable to that of a new religion. ... Our law is in fact the sum and substance of what we have to teach them. It is, so to speak, the gospel of the English, and it is a compulsory gospel which admits of no dissent and no disobedience.

This complete about-face in cultural policy resulted in the alienation of the native intelligentsia who felt, and quite rightly, that the movement was one towards Westernization. Even though many educated Indians had agreed with the criticisms which Orientalists leveled at some Indian social practices, yet, when faced with the intolerant dogmatism of the English Utilitarians, many felt compelled to defend, to a greater or lesser extent, those very same customs that they were once eager to help eliminate. The syncretic changes which the Orientalists had injected into the traditional world view of the intelligentsia had the appearance of being natural or orthogenetic since they were presented from within the cultural tradition. The Anglicists, on the other hand, came armed with "a compulsory gospel that admits of no dissent and no disobedience." Dissent was the natural response.
Images of India

The images of India and of Indians that appear in the writings of Mill and Macaulay as representatives of the Utilitarian and Evangelical sides of Anglicism, are replete with deprecatory adjectives and metaphors which reflect the same kind of moral indignation towards Indian culture seen manifest in the missionary attitudes.

A few passages from Mill's *History of British India*, (1821), which enjoyed a wide currency amongst civil servants and educated Indians alike, serve to illustrate the cultural attitudes of the man who stood behind the philosophy of the Anglicists.

In truth the Hindu like the Eunuch excells in the qualities of a slave. ...In the still more important qualities which constitute what we call the moral character, the Hindu ranks very low. 32

And further,

Even in manners and 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. 33

Mill traced the depravity of Indian culture and Indian people to the oppression of numerous invaders and to the Brahmin priests who, together, held the country and people in tyrannical subjection. Nevertheless, he held out hope for the improvement of Indian society seeing in India the presence of a benevolent government (British) executing its
authority according to the principles of the Utilitarian credo. In 1830, Mill was appointed Examiner to the British East Indian Company which, according to Eric Stokes, situated him at "the very center of power and in a position to carry into practice the principles of utility as he had expounded in his History ... ."34 Between 1830 and 1857, the era of Anglicism, British policy in India operated under the assumption that Indian society could be regenerated through the implementation of social reforms. Though still of a patronizing tone and carrying the excesses of a feeling of cultural superiority, the English reformers were confident that the moral depravity and "phlegmatic indolence" of Indians could be eradicated. Charles Grant represented this attitude when he said:

If the character of the Hindoos proceeded only from a physical origin, there might be some foundation for thinking it unalterable but nothing is more plain than that it is formed chiefly by moral causes, adequate to the effect produced: if those causes therefore, can be removed, their effect will cease, and new principles and motives will produce new conduct and a different character. 35

By introducing Christianity and English civil law into India, and by educating Indians in the noble traditions of Western arts and sciences, it was thought that India could rise above her present "uncivilized," "barbaric" state.

V. IMPERIALIST IMAGES OF INDIA AND OF INDIANS

The Mutiny of 1857, though variously subtitled, is usually marked as a significant turning point in the official British attitude towards India. However, the Mutiny could not, in itself, be held responsible for the change in British attitudes that witnessed the truncation of the
reformist spirit and the emergence of a conservative, anti-reform movement. To the British in India, the Mutiny stood as living proof of the cunning, treacherous nature of the natives of India. "It is not correct to say," according to Hutchins "that the Mutiny caused the change in attitude. The British response to the Mutiny gave a definite shape to Imperial attitudes in the following decades, providing in abundance justification and illustration of the presumed need of a new policy of governance. ...The particular manner in which Englishmen responded to the Mutiny was not necessary or inevitable, but a reflection of a prior shift in thinking which had begun long before the Mutiny broke out."36

**The New Sciences**

The most intriguing thing about the emergence of the racist ideology in British thinking on India at this time was its divergence from Christianity and its alliance with the newly evolving "sciences" of ethnography, climatology and phrenology. (Actually, as will be discussed later, this shift involved more of a mutation of Christian doctrine than it did a distinct break with it. In fact, Christianity proved remarkably flexible in adapting itself to the new "universally valid truths" that were uncovered in the 19th century.) The important factor here is the denial of the Biblical idea of a single creation. The various races of man were now thought to be the result of distinct and separate creations, and they were thought to have been arranged by "Providence" in a hierarchy of "best" to "worst." According to one American ethnologist writing in 1857: "There are no greater differences between the lion, tiger and the panther, or the dog, wolf and jackal than between the White Man, Negro, and Mongol."37 Furthermore, precise, scientific measurements
of the anatomical features of the races, particularly of the size of the cranium, now enabled man to accurately ascertain the intellectual and moral capacities of the various races. It was generally believed that "In the size of the head and face, and their mutual relations, we find the best indications of those mental and animal differences which, under all circumstances and from anti-historic times, have manifested themselves as the dividing line between the Races of Man." Science was able to prove that no amount of education could alter the relative position of the benighted races. Such improvements as would be necessary for the achievement of racial equality would first require an increase in the cranial capacity of the inferior races. Proof of this fact was discerned in the case of India where, even after long exposure to the benefits of European civilization, Indians were yet "unaltered and seemingly unalterable."

The yardstick of civilization utilized by these pseudo-scientists was gauged in accordance with an adulterated version of the Darwinian principle of Natural Selection. It was force and technology that had enabled the Western nations to conquer virtually all of Asia and Africa. The fact that it was the white man alone who possessed the means and the ability to this end was to be taken as proof of his natural superiority. The law of the jungle determined that only the fittest would survive: the meek could never inherit the earth for the strong would inevitably conquer them.

Utilizing the theory of racial superiority, E.B. Tyler devised a classification scheme as a means of evaluating civilizations. His expression is classic:
The principle criteria of classification are the absence or presence, high or low development of the industrial arts ... the extent of scientific knowledge, the definitions of moral principles, the condition of religious belief and ceremony, the degree of social and political organization, and so forth. Thus on the definite basis of compared facts, ethnographers are able to set up at least a rough scale of civilization. Few would dispute that the following races are arranged rightly in order of culture: — Australian, Tahitian, Aztec, Chinese, Italian.  

It was assumed that the superior races possessed blood that was stronger, a constitution that was fitter and a keener intellect than the lesser breeds of humanity. Furthermore, as a result of the historical isolation of the races of man, there had been no consanguinity between them and it was to be assumed any movement in that direction now would, rather than increase the strength of the weaker races, result in the destruction of the superior one. Given this fact, the best and the most natural relationship to develop between the races of man would be to have the superior races govern the inferior ones. This was to be done with justice and firmness and with the goal in mind of effecting what improvements were possible and desirable, given the limitations of the weaker races.

Doctrines of Imperialism

This paternalistic, racist attitude is well documented in the annals of the 19th century. For example, in 1878, Sir George Couper, lieutenant-governor of the North-Western Provinces of India made this comment:

...it seems to me the time has come for us to cease putting our heads in a bush and shouting black is white. We all know that in point of fact black is not white; and the sooner we plainly recognize and act upon that fact the better it will be for our influence and
hold over the millions we govern. That there should be one law alike for the European and native is an excellent thing in theory but if it really could be introduced in practice we should have no business in the country ... .

Another example of this "white man's burden" attitude appears in the writing of Anthony Trollope. He says:

We have risen so high that we may almost boast to have placed ourselves above national glory. The welfare of the coming world is now in the proper care of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Sir Charles Dilke, a staunch defender of British Imperialism, preferred to describe the races of man on a scale of "dear" to "cheap":

Everywhere we have found that the difficulties that impede the progress to universal dominion of the English people lie in the conflict with the cheaper races. ... the dearer ( races) ... are, on the whole, likely to destroy the cheaper peoples and ... Saxondom will rise triumphant from the doubtful struggle.

Perhaps one of the most influential voices of the latter half of the 19th century was that of James Fitzjames Stephen. He held firmly to the view that men were "fundamentally unequal," and lent his wholehearted support to the idea that, on account of the ineptitude of Indians as leaders, the government of India should be autocratic and British. In defense of the present government he said:

It is essentially an absolute government founded not on consent but on conquest. It does not represent the native principles of life or of government, and it can never do so until it represents heathenism and barbarism. It represents a belligerent civilization, and no anomaly can be so striking or so dangerous as its administration by men who, being at the head of a government founded on conquest, implying at every point the superiority of the conquering race ... and having no justification for its existence except that superiority, shrink from the open, uncompromising, straightforward
assertion of it, seek to apologize for their own position and refuse from whatever cause to uphold and support it. 44

**Religious Doctrines of Imperialism**

It seems, however, this new faith in science did not usurp the Victorian faith in the doctrines of Evangelical Christianity. Quite the reverse. The new scientific evidence was brought into the service of the peculiar dogmatism of this 19th century creed, somewhat in the capacity of an instrument for "justification by science." The Victorians believed themselves to be the chosen race, the New Israel, selected by Providence to lead the peoples of the world to a happy state of civilization.

Ainslee Embree sums up the evangelical approach to India after 1857 in this way:

For those who accepted the evangelical imperatives of Christianity — and there were many such men in political life in England and in the Civil Service and Army in India — the British Government and people had failed to fulfill the obligation of spreading the knowledge of the Gospel. The Mutiny was seen by them as a warning sent by Providence to call men to more serious Christian endeavour. Alexander Duff, one of the most influential missionaries in the 19th century, spoke of the violence of 1857 as evidence that "God is visiting our people in this land in hot displeasure," and argued that the events of the war would "portray to men's senses the cruelties of heathenism, and proclaim aloud the necessity of the regenerating, humanizing influences of the gospel of grace and salvation." 45

Duff's objective in India was to "kill Hinduism" 46 which he believed was "from its base to its highest pinnacle a citadel of error." 47 Descriptions of Hinduism such as the one following, again excerpted from Duff's writings on the subject, display the typical missionary attitude, basically unchanged as it was throughout the century:

Of all the systems of false religion ever fabricated
by the perverse ingenuity of fallen man, Hinduism
is surely the most stupendous — whether we consider
the boundless extent of its range, or the boundless
multiplicity of its component parts. Of all systems
of false religion it is that which seems to embody
the largest amount and variety of semblances and
counterfeits of divinely revealed facts and doctrines.  

Images of India and of Indians

The concepts of Indian character which grew up within this ethno-
centric ideology quite readily submitted to stereotypy. Developed as
they were in a situation of cultural estrangement, where only menials
came into full view of the image-makers, the Indian of the colonialist's
imagination was an admixture of the most primitive elements of humanity.
The following quotations present a cross-section of British images of
Indian character.

Indians are at once childish and ferocious ... (possessed of a) ... mixture of treachery, child-
ishness and ferocity that could be bred only in
the same jungle with the tiger who crouches,
springs, gambols and devours.

Comparison of the physical attributes of the two peoples was common:

In point of race the Hindoos have been regarded by
naturalists as belonging to what they call the
Caucasian, and even to the same family of that
race as the white man of Europe! But this is a
fantastical notion ... The European is white, the
Hindoos black. ... The European is taller than the
Hindoo, more robust and more persevering. Even in
the rudest stages of civilization, the European
has exhibited a firmness, perseverance and enter-
prise, which strikingly contrast with the feeble,
slow, irresolute character of the Hindoo.

Again we see the emphasis on childishness in J. F. Stephen:

A predisposition to cunning and childish subtlety
exercised upon words is one of the greatest
weaknesses of the natives.

Sensuality and laziness were prominent features of the British images:
Those niggers are such a confounded sensual lazy set, cramming themselves with sweetmeats, and smoking their cursed chillumjees all the day and night, that you might as well think to train pigs. 53

Macaulay voiced this classic opinion about the Bengali character:

What the horns are to the buffalo, what the paw is to the tiger, what the sting is to the bee, what beauty, according to the old Greek song, is to woman, deceit is to the Bengalee. 54

Flamboyancy was also thought to be a character trait of Indians:

... with Blacky everything is for display, and many a dashing fellow carries his fortune in his horse and accoutrements .... 55

Deceitful, lascivious, lazy, ostentatious, corrupt, childlike — these were the predominant images the Britishers had of Indians. They thought of themselves as "living amongst the seven deadly sins." These personality traits, anathema as they were to all that was thought to be good and virtuous by a Victorian gentleman, can hardly be believed to reflect an objective observation of Indian character. As has been noted in connection with the earlier discussion of Mannoni's theories, the phenomenon of projection is quite obviously a factor here. The moral fanaticism of the Victorian Age predisposed the individual to sluff off onto an inferior creature of his own creation, any moral turpitude he might discover within himself.

Anglicists had attributed all the evils of Indian civilization to its benighted religion, perpetrated as it was by a corrupt priesthood. But these ills were thought to be remediable merely by the introduction of Christianity and British Law. However, when this mission failed (as was evident by the 1860's), the causes of the failure were not attributed to any lack of understanding of the dynamics of cultural encounter on the
part of the perpetrators of the experiment. Rather, the failure to eradicate the moral depravity of the Indian people was explained according to the newly discovered principles of Natural Law: the inferior nature of the Indian race would not permit improvement towards the civilized state as it appeared in the British nation.

VI. ANALYSIS OF THE BRITISH IMAGES AS A RESPONSE TO STRESS

The British attitudes towards India and Indians reflect a reaction to a situation of stress. They are a response to a sensed threat, to a personal challenge felt to be coming from two directions: one from outside India, that is, from Europe, and the other from within India itself.

The tightly knit society built by the British in India may be explained as a conservative reaction to the radical changes in the homeland: the rise of the working classes and the democratic ideals associated with that movement; the currentcy of the Marxist ideals denouncing elites and encouraging the class struggle of the proletariat against his chains to the bourgeoisie; and, most decidedly, the incipient atheism of the 19th century industrial culture. The status-oriented, elitist values of the colonial were threatened by the changes which these popular ideas implied for India. Consequently, India came to be regarded by these English men and women as the last stronghold of the aristocratic life. They reinforced their claims on status and privilege, feeling it their responsibility to preserve the dignity and tradition surrounding the English aristocracy. (This, of course, marked a digression from the attitude of earlier generations who looked to India as the great hope of the future: all the ideals of the 18th century Enlightenment were destined
The solidarity of the colonial society was achieved partly by the shared sense of belonging to a respectable group of the highest Victorian order. It was also enhanced by the image the colonialists had of their own society in its Indian setting. Somewhat on the analogy of the lotus, they thought of themselves as standing proudly in the midst of the filth and moral depravity of India, yet unstained and undefiled by it. Indeed, this attitude was an essential element of their group solidarity and it led to invidious comparisons between the two cultural groups.

It is at this point that the dynamic inter-play of impact-stress-response occurs in 19th century India. The British felt the threat of disintegration and they responded to this crisis accordingly. Their self-protective reaction created stress for Indians who were forced to act in such a way as to reduce its psychologically destructive effects. The real issue confronting both cultural communities was the fear of change and its concomitant loss of meaning, stability and identity. Broad social, economic and political changes threatened the integrity of their social orders and their personal philosophies. However, instead of responding to the real source of that threat, that is, rather than becoming involved in the changes which were realized to be inevitable, the British in India retreated into a reactionary mold and attempted to court the past. Then their frustrations about the change still assailing them was taken out on something that was symbolic of the threat. The symbol functioned as a defense mechanism whereby the real threat need not be dealt with.

To the British, the Indian served as a symbol of the anti-Christ.
He and his "disgusting religion" were always to be kept in mind as an example of what would happen should the English forsake the values and beliefs of their heritage. Indians felt the stress of change as a diffused threat, difficult to grasp in its totality, impossible to pin-point at its source. One thing did stand out clearly, however, and this was the hostility of the British towards them, manifested as it was in their actions as well as their attitudes. Manifested in the British images of India and of Indians was the degradation, the indignity and the overwhelming sense of loss, of destruction and of instability the Indians experienced.

As a response to the stress of life in India itself, the conservative posture which characterized British policy and attitudes in the latter half of the 19th century may be explained as a reactionary movement on the part of a small foreign community discovering its vulnerability in an alien, hostile land. Or so the Mutiny of 1857 with its gruesome tales of unimaginable atrocities and treachery seemed to indicate. To this small, colonialist "family," the Mutiny was a warning that their privileged position was not secure. A native rebellion was a challenge to the status quo. It had to be answered with power and force because the maintenance of this status quo was vital to the interests of every Englishman in India, whether he was a colonial official or a private businessman. The new racist ideology functioned to justify the British position in India, the institution of privilege as an inherent right of those who governed India, and the open acknowledgement of the natural superiority of the British people.

The images of India and of Indians which the colonialists traded amongst themselves must be seen in the light of the values, attitudes,
beliefs and the sense of identity which individuals of this society possessed. These images, in their functional capacity, belong to a broad system of ideological symbols which serve to maintain and preserve the sense of reality behind cultural values and personal identity.
CHAPTER III. NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITISH ATTITUDES TOWARDS INDIA AND INDIANS

1 The British Orientalists represented the administrative heirarchy of the British East India Company. They were the civil service elite in a company protected by the British Government. Speaking of their power and their role, David Kopf says they were "virtual Caesar's entrusted with the political and military responsibility of preserving the Company's possessions from the inroads of other Indian powers." British Orientalism and the Bengal Renaissance, 1969, p. 14.

2 Ibid., p. 24.
3 Ibid., p. 22.
4 Ibid., p. 97.
5 Ibid., p. 38.
6 Ibid., p. 38.
7 Ibid., p. 39.
8 John Morearty, "Images of India in Swami Virekānanda and Others," p. 52.
9 Ibid., p. 53.
10 Kopf, p. 40.

11 One must also take into consideration the political advantage of establishing a cultural center such as this. The idea of the Orientalists was to establish a rapport with the natives so that they (British) would not be treated as aliens. The insights into Indian culture discovered in this way could then be incorporated into administrative policy.

12 The cause of the Fall was variously attributed to the series of invasions India fell plague to, to the mendacious tactics of the Brahmins, or, vaguely to the inevitability of the natural way of things.

13 munshi was a member of the native literati who was employed at the College as a language tutor.

15 Ibid., p. 175.

16 These instructions, "to exterminate Heathenism in India," were delivered to the first missionary in India (1713), a German Lutheran named Ziegenbalg, who had become "Indianized" in the same sense as the Orientalists were. Kopf, p. 52.

18 Ibid., p. 620.

19 Ibid., p. 620. Says Majumdar: "... their (i.e. the missionaries') righteous indignation was not provoked by similar abuses in their own society. Thus, while the burning of widows was regarded as a barbarous trait in Hindu culture, no thought was given to the burning of heretics in Europe. While caste system (sic) was condemned, no reference was made, even for the sake of comparison, to the slavery and serfdom in ancient and medieval Europe, and the treatment of the "blacks" by the "whites" in modern times."

20 Quoted in Morearty, p. 40.

21 Quoted in ibid., p. 40.

22 Quoted in ibid., pp. 40-41.

23 Quoted in Nemai Sadhan Bose, The Indian Awakening and Bengal, 1969, pp. 63-64.

24 Quoted in Kopf, p. 142.

25 Quoted in Morearty, p. 25.

26 The phrase is Kopf's.

27 Kopf, pp. 246-247.


29 Ibid., p. 597.

30 The closure of the College of Fort William was fatal to the entire educational system built up by the Orientalists. Its sister Colleges were soon dismantled and English education replaced the dual Indian-English program of studies in the curriculum of the new institutions established by the Anglicists. See Kopf, p. 241.


32 Quoted in Majumdar, p. 619.

33 Quoted in Kopf, p. 240.


Ibid., pp. 79-80.

37 J. C. Nott, quoted in Metcalf, p. 310.

38 J. Aitken Meigs, quoted in ibid., p. 311.

39 R. Knox, quoted in ibid., p. 312.

40 Quoted in Hutchins, p. 124.

41 Quoted in Anil Seal, The Emergence of Indian Nationalism, 1968, p. 144.

42 Quoted in L. Gardiner and J. Davidson, British Imperialism in the Late 19th Century, 1968, p. 10.

43 Quoted in ibid., p. 12.

44 Quoted in Metcalf, p. 318.


46 Quoted in Bose, p. 116.

47 Quoted in ibid., p. 67.

48 Quoted in ibid., p. 126.

49 Hutchins, p. 102.

50 Henry Lawrence, quoted in ibid., p. 177.

51 From India: Geographical Statistical and Historical, 1858, quoted in ibid., p. 68.

52 Quoted in ibid., p. 71.


54 Quoted in ibid., p. 55.

55 Quoted in ibid., p. 55.

56 Ibid., p. 128. In the words of J. F. Stephen, India was "the one sphere in which an Englishman who is neither born in the purple nor minded to flatter mobs, can hope just at present to serve his country to any serious purpose."
CHAPTER IV

THE INDIAN RESPONSE TO NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITISH ATTITUDES:
CULTURAL CLASSICISM AND THE SEARCH FOR CULTURAL IDENTITY

I. INTRODUCTION

In terms of its psychological effect, the impact of the British images of India and of Indians is to be discovered in the identity crises it engendered amongst the English educated Indians. Susceptible as the educated Indian was to Anglicization, he felt keenly the loss of dignity the 19th century image of India and Indians implied. The explicit value judgement contained in the British images undermined the individual's self-confidence as an Indian, dislocated his sense of identity — cultural as well as personal — threatening thereby his sense of worth as an individual and as a Hindu. He perceived this indignity as "spreading out in widening circles from the person himself, to his family, to the whole of his culture (Hinduism) at the present moment, and finally into the past as well."

To this newly formed class of English educated Indians which was, to use McCully's phrase, "an anomalous ... hybrid class ... neither wholly English nor wholly native," the crisis of identity was nowhere more strongly impressed upon them as individuals than in the cultural dichotomy existing in the home. Here the conflict between newly found intellectual ties with the alien "modern" culture nurtured in the English school, and the "primitive world of naked children, uncultured semi-clad women and superstitious servants" prevailing in the home, became exaggerated and remained unresolved. Summarizing an editorial which appeared in the
Indian Mirror, a journal of the Brahmo Samaj, in 1885, McCully offers this example of the family situation:

To take an ordinary case, the family idols were tended by the mother and other female members of the family at sunrise and sunset with flowers, ablutions and ceremonial observances. In the meantime, the midday occupation of the student might consist in analyzing Milton's Areopagitica, a favourite text book, or some other scathing exposition of priestcraft and idolatry.

The implications of this type of confrontation of values within the individual have been discussed more fully in Chapter II. Levenson brings out very well the nature of the tension that results when disjunction occurs between the source of one's cultural and personal identity (history) and the source of one's loyalties (value). He says:

History and value are worlds apart, but men are drawn to both, with an emotional commitment to the first and an intellectual commitment to the second; they need to ask the two incompatible questions, and they yearn to be able to answer "Mine" and "True." 8

The task of the following pages will be to document the ways in which some Indians sought to effect a re-alignment between these two diverse commitments.

II. IDENTITY CRISIS AND THE COPING PROCESS

Taking at face value the indictments of the British, some educated Indians came to feel ashamed of their religion, their cultural traditions and even their own people. As a result they experienced cultural alienation and identity crisis, this latter indicating the severity of the conflict between intellectual and emotional commitments within the individual. Some became apostates which made them outcastes, in its
literal sense in the context of Indian society. Appropriating the exotic English culture, they hoped to acquire a new status and a new identity. Unfortunately, most of them could do little more than imitate the actions of the "Sahibs." A typical description of such Anglicized Indians as seen through the eyes of their own countrymen appeared in a Calcutta periodical in 1851:

He has a smattering of English ... is ultrafashionable 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 ...  

The majority of the educated class, however, preferred the stability of the traditional social organization. They found it easier to accept hypocrisy in themselves or to live a double life than to submit to the chaos and meaninglessness the apostate was forced to cope with. So, even for the individual who chose stability there was yet the problem of extreme psychological stress. The tension he perceived as existing between the attitude of faith demanded of him as a good Hindu and the spirit of criticism inculcated in him via his education demanded resolution. A crisis of identity motivated him to search for a new, viable identity, one which could reunite the now disparate claims of "history" and "value." He was unwilling to embrace iconoclasm and reject all the symbols and the idols that clad the spiritual center of the Hindu religion, and yet he was committed to the new ideas which flooded India during the 19th century, ideas which were not amenable to current cultural values nor to the sense of personal and cultural identity derived from them. They were not, to use Levenson's phrase, "congenial to the claims of
Man," says Levenson "is not a neutral machine, calmly recording right answers; if a foreign answer is to be intellectually accepted as right, the emotional claims of history must somehow be squared." Thus the Indian intellectual, in a "supreme effort of cultural consciousness," appealed to his culture's past, to his own cultural ancestors, to yield a solution to his present crisis: the restoration to the individual of the dignity and pride in himself and in his heritage, in the eyes of the foreigner as well as in his own eyes. In other words, he consulted his past for a "formula with which to keep the psychological peace."

In turning to religion to aid him in the search for a new cultural identity, the English educated Indian, himself facing a crisis of identity spearheaded by a loss of faith in the values, beliefs and practices that comprised traditional Hinduism, was consenting -- even if unconsciously -- to the formative role of religion in this most strategic dimension of human existence. Before the intrusion of Western values, Hinduism provided a viable set of definitions of the world and one's place in it. However, the Anglicized Indian realized that for him, Hinduism had ceased to perform its basic function of integrating society and personality, mainly because the structures and values of that personality had changed while neither the corresponding structures of society nor its religious matrix had followed suit. This stress of belief forced him in one of three directions: he rejected Hinduism as false, he spiritualized it or he re-interpreted it. Except for a few converted Anglophiles, the Anglicist alternative was always an excellent reason for choosing one of the latter two paths. The Anglicists not only claimed to be able to
provide ultimate truths for all areas of human concern, but they also displayed a determination to force Christianity and British Law upon India and "exterminate heathenism" in the process. Resisting the psychological and spiritual incursions of alien and alienating cultural forms, the English educated Indian made the "supreme effort of cultural consciousness" in choosing to remain a Hindu. He resisted the ethnocentric claims of the Anglicist, the Evangelist and the Imperialist, consulted his past (in effect, the legacy of the Orientalists), and demanded it yield up to him the appropriate definitions of the new reality he was experiencing. The result was that the values and definitions which were, in Morearty's words "in the abstract Western as well as Indian, were translated into a set of symbols with which the Hindu community identified in a special way." Out of his past he forged two new myths, those of the Indian Golden Age and of Indian spirituality. By this creative action, the Indian intellectual became both a cultural historiographer and a "cultural classicist."

III. CULTURAL CLASSICISM AS A RESPONSE TO IDENTITY CRISIS

Cultural classicism must be understood as a psychological device. The cultural historiographer does not approach his subject matter in a neutral, objective frame of mind. Rather, he looks at his material from the point of view of its value to him. In other words, the facts of history are filtered through a highly specific value system tuned into the needs and experiences of the investigator's own "present time." Any historiography, says Von Grunebaum "is determined on the one hand by content (data), function (of data within context studied), and structure (of the
data making them amenable to treatment within the context), and, on the other hand, by motivation or objective ("use") and method and style of presentation. "... Mit den Zeiten wechseln du Probabilitaten."  

Although the reverence for the past displayed by the historiographer appears at first to be romantic and credulous, it is essential to realize that the past is basically a mental construct, an interpretive act of the historiographer himself. His vision is unalterably a product of his present situation plus his anticipation of the future, and it is this vision which appears in the historical model. Maurice Natanson, in his essay "History as a Finite Province of Meaning," clarifies the subjectivity of our perception of history when he says:

Man is not only a being who lives in the world; he is a being who has a world, and even further, we may say, he is a being who does a world. Whatever is given to him in experience, therefore, is transposed and translated into the fabric of his cognitive and conative life and becomes restructured and reformed into an aspect of his self-awareness. ... (History) is a reality of the subjectivity that creates and defines it, that bears its meaning, and that is witness to its truth.  

The dynamic function of the classicist's endeavour now becomes clear. In the hands of the historian, who is actually a social philosopher, the past not only provides a foothold and an identity for the present and the future, but it also serves to justify the present need for change. Significantly, both the claims of history and the demands of the future impose themselves on the reformer's mind when he constructs an authoritative model for change from fragments selected from his cultural history. This is what is known as formative history. It is an especially effective tool for rendering heterogenetic change into orthogenetic change.
and thereby giving it meaning and value. It also enables a people to achieve what Von Grunebaum calls "self-stylization," the sense of collective identity and cultural individuality so vital to modern society.

In the light of Mannoni's analysis of the colonial situation, Von Grunebaum's comments on the two basic psychological functions of classicism are revealing. First he points to the feeling of security and self-assurance which may be drawn from the reconstruction of a history filled with heroes and glory. Thus classicism serves to diminish the sense of inadequacy or shame a cultural group may experience with respect to its present condition. This new found confidence injects a new life into the group. Like a re-birth, it reactivates individuals immobilized by the loss of dignity and the threat of the loss of identity. Not only does classicism operate to rearrange the value system of a culture, but it also discovers for the group a dynamic, new cultural perspective which stimulates and redirects the motivational forces of the individual in accordance with the new self-image.

In summary, the effect of the Western impact can be seen in the identity crisis experienced by Indians who, through English education and employment in the professions and the Government, came into close contact with the culture of the British. Disruptive as this impact was of the individual's traditional values, the ensuing identity crisis placed him under severe psychological stress and forced him to respond in such a way as to reduce its debilitating effects. He experienced himself as surrounded by "an expanding network of contacts and loyalties" with no integrative element therein to assist him in making his experiences meaningful. Responding to this stress, he sought to discover, by means of
the classicist pursuit, a new cultural and personal identity, one that would restore his faith in himself and in his heritage as well as earn him the respect of foreigners.

It will be seen in the following pages that those individuals who engaged in the classicist pursuit, born as it was of a curious marriage of East and West, encountered serious problems, not the least of which stemmed from the fact that the English educated community represented a tiny, almost insignificant minority of the total Indian population. Because their methods were eclectic, they produced syncretistic schemes which were often uninspired, superficial, and self-contradictory. With their dubious interpretations of traditional ideas and their often absurd methods of exegesis, they offended the orthodox community who were quick to challenge the authority of the modernizers. And, of course, the Britisher was little prepared to accept the frequent claim issuing from this cultural historiography, namely, that Hinduism, in its pure form, was equal, if not superior to — and perhaps even the source of — the Christian religion.

In looking at classicism as a response to degradation and its corollary of identity crisis it will be seen that, as an occupation of the intelligentsia, classicism persisted in some form or another throughout the century. Taking this response to be a constant within the English educated community, its primary variable is seen to be the degree of identification with one cultural community as over against the other. This, in turn, was a function of external circumstances, namely, those political and economic factors which altered both the relationship between the British officials and the English educated Indians, and the pattern of
loyalties and identities dependent thereon. Without dwelling too much on these external determinants, the remainder of the chapter will attempt to map out two major movements of this variable in the course of the 19th century.

For the purposes of discussion, the 19th century may be divided into two phases of cultural classicism and the re-interpretation of Hinduism. The early phase, 1820-1860, was marked by a concerted effort to make Hinduism conform to the ideals and values of Christianity, which indicates the degree of identity the native intelligentsia had with British culture. The myth of the spiritual East versus the material West begins to win converts in the educated community and it is closely aligned with the central theme of the reinterpretive schemes, namely, the image of the Vedic era as a Golden Age. In the later phase, 1860-1900, apologetics become more defiant and show an increasing degree of liberation from the bondage to Christian values, beliefs and practices. The Vedic Golden Age myth begins to lose some of its lustre as members of the intelligentsia gradually turn to join the orthodox defense of Purānic religion. This was the era of cultural and political nationalism when individuals began to feel the necessity of purging the country of alien rulers and alien ideas. Towards the end of the period, Neo-Vedāntism comes into the fore and, in the person of Śvāmī Vivekānanda, effects a viable synthesis with the conflicting images of India's heritage.

IV. RAMMOHUN ROY AND THE IMAGES OF THE GOLDEN AGE AND INDIAN SPIRITUALITY

Raja Rammohun Roy (1772-1833) was one of those truly seminal figures in the history of Indian modernization. Yet he was also a transitional
individual containing within himself the seeds of ambivalence so characteristic of the "assaulted" intellectual. Kopf describes Rammohun as a typical representative of the educated Indian who, with his "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 ..." had, with the typical inconsistency,

... 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 behaviour, at the same time that he strove to preserve satisfying social ties with family, kin and the transcendent society of the sacred.

Rammohun was the first Indian to utilize the Golden Age image of India as a means to restoring the dignity of Indians and as a rationale for social change. It is important to note that Rammohun, though an avowed rationalist with progressive ideas, indicates by his use of the past a strong dependency upon traditional structures of thought. His perception of the past places him squarely in the framework of the traditional view of time as being a continuum. The Golden Age myth depends for its efficacy on the belief that between the past which is "our past" or, better still, "our passed," and the present which is "our present," there exists no observable break. Rammohun, then, is not attempting to establish a link between "the" past and "the" present by means of the Golden Age myth. Rather, what he is doing is extending his present duration to include that which has passed, thereby verifying the unity of the universe, or at least the segment of the universe his cultural ancestors have shaped. He also chooses, very significantly, a particular
segment of that "passed," namely, the illud tempus. In appealing to the original ancestors, the primal parents of the tradition, as the only true authorities, and in advocating both a return to their authority and a renewal of their creative powers in the present day, Rammohun is thinking in mythical terms rather than in rational ones. He is verifying that 19th century India is indisolubly connected in time and in blood relationship (through the ancestors) with a high Aryan culture. If one accepts such a dependency relationship, then it follows naturally what was applicable to one's ancestors is applicable to oneself: if one's ancestors were great heroes worthy of praise, so too are their lineal descendents; if one's ancestors adhered to certain moral principles, then their descendents are obliged to submit to these same principles, especially if they are deemed to be the source of ancestral greatness.

Morearty suggests this type of thinking is not necessarily exclusive to traditional or pre-modern cultures but it is obscured by the excessive overlay of rationalistic thought patterns which characterize the modern view of the universe:

The fundamental premise ... is that the rationalistic, monadic, model of the universe, is a grossly inadequate one, untrue to human perceptions of interdependency, and that Freudian psychology and process philosophy come much closer to describing the basic and internal flow of continuity which is felt to exist especially within the child and his parents (with their "tied" values), and then, by extension, between one's present community and its biologico-cultural "ancestors."

The central feature of Rammohun's image of Golden Age India was the emphasis on the monotheistic religion of the Aryan ancestors. In fact, his image was almost exclusively a religious one: its formative elements were spiritual, a theme consonant with his belief that India was
essentially a spiritual nation. It is important to note that in his insistence on monotheism, Rammohun is enunciating a belief he obtained perhaps more as a result of his encounter with Sufi mysticism as a young man than through his later encounter with Christianity and his indirect contact with the Orientalists. Consequently, the material accomplishments of ancient Indian civilization so highly eulogized in later periods when the impact of Western technology was felt more threateningly, are not a part of Rammohun's image. This omission may also be construed to be a strategic one if one takes into account Rammohun's religious convictions, his social aims and his attitude towards the missionaries, all of which point to his keen desire to prove Hinduism was not inferior to Christianity. Referring to the rather dubious proselytizing methods of "that body of English gentlemen, who are called missionaries," Rammohun levels this pointed criticism:

It is true that the apostles of Jesus Christ used to preach the superiority of the Christian religion to the natives of different countries. But we must recollect that they were not of the rulers of those countries where they preached. Were the missionaries likewise to preach the Gospel and distribute books in countries not conquered by the English, such as Turkey, Persia &c., which are much nearer England, they would be esteemed a body of men truly zealous in propagating religion and in following the example of the founders of Christianity. In Bengal, where the English are the sole rulers, and where the mere name of Englishman is sufficient to frighten people, an encroachment on the rights of her poor, timid and humble inhabitants and upon their religion, cannot be viewed in the eyes of God or the public as a justifiable act. For wise and good men always feel disinclined to hurt those who are of much less strength than themselves, and if such weak creatures be dependent on them and subject to their authority, they can never attempt, even in thought, to mortify their feelings.

He goes on to liken the Christian gentlemen to "savage conquerers," who
attempt to force their religion "by means of abuse and insult."\textsuperscript{39} Says Morearty:

\begin{quote}
... it is not difficult to sense ... beneath the polished surface of intricate philosophical and theological argument, Rammohun's sublimated rage at the missionaries' preachings of the "debasedness" of his religion and that of the Hindu community.\textsuperscript{40}
\end{quote}

Thus we find Rammohun writing a scholarly pamphlet entitled \textit{The Precepts of Jesus: the Guide to Peace and Happiness}, wherein he attacks the "Divine Mystery" of Christianity, the doctrine of the Trinity:

\begin{quote}
They call Jesus Christ the Son of God and the very God: - How can the son be the very Father? They sometimes call Jesus Christ the Son of man, and yet say no man was his Father. They say that God is one; and yet say that the Father is God, the Son is God and the Holy Ghost is God. They say that God must be worshipped in spirit and yet they worship Jesus Christ as very God, although he is possessed of a material body. They say that the Son is of the same essence and existence as the Father, and they also say that the Son is equal to the Father. But how can equality subsist except between objects possessed of different essences and existences?\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}

He concludes, the Christianity taught by the missionaries, namely, the worship of a Man-God or a God-Man, was absurd, irrational and self-contradictory. Indeed, it was a false corruption of the monotheistic religion which Jesus, who was a man and not a Divine Incarnation of the Supreme God, taught to the Jewish people. If Hinduism had strayed from her former adherence to pure monotheism, then Christianity was no less guilty of the same offence. His advice to the missionaries was to separate out the "monstrous" doctrines of the Atonement and the Trinity, "the frail edifice of their extraordinary Creed," with its "parti-coloured veil of sophistry," and proceed to preach the practical parts of their religion, namely, the precepts of Jesus which, because of their emphasis on sound moral...
principles, would prove beneficial to anyone who would hear them.\textsuperscript{42}

Rammohun states that his ideal of showing tolerance for all religions made him reluctant to engage in such a controversy with the Christian missionaries. But he feels compelled to do so on account of the invidious comparisons of the two religions engaged in by the missionaries:

In accordance with the mild and liberal spirit of universal toleration, which is well-known to be a fundamental principle of Hindooism, I am far from wishing to oppose any system of religion, much less Christianity; and my regard for the feelings of its professors would restrain me from thus exposing its errors, were they not forced upon my notice by the indiscreet asaults still made by Christian writers on the Hindoo religion. But when they scruple not to wound the feelings of a Hindoo, by attacking the most ancient and sacred oracles of his faith, the inspired Vedas, which have been revered for generations, for time immemorial, should he submit to such wanton aggression without endeavouring to convince these gentlemen, that, in the language of their own Scripture, they "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel" (Matt. XXIII., 24)? Hence they may at least learn from experience a lesson of Charity, which they are ready enough to inculcate upon others, overlooking, at the same time, the precept given by their God: "Do unto others as you would wish to be done by," implying, that if you wish others to treat your religion fairly, you should not throw offensive reflections upon the religion of others.\textsuperscript{43}

Rammohun believed that "the real spirit of the Hindu scriptures is but the declaration of the unity of God."\textsuperscript{44} He set out to prove "that the adoration of the Supreme Being in spirit was prescribed by the Vedas to men of understanding ... (and that)... the Veda actually prohibited the worship of any kind of figured beings."\textsuperscript{45} He believed that the numerous deities which appeared in the Vedic hymns were not separate gods but were only appellations of the Supreme Being:
It is indisputably evident that none of these metaphorical representations, which arise from the elevated style in which the Vedas are written, were designed to be viewed in any other light than mere allegory.

In defense of his position, he says:

Never have I ever pretended to reform or to discover the doctrines of the unity of God, nor have I ever assumed the title of a reformer or discoverer; so far from such an assumption, I have urged in every work that I have hitherto published, that the doctrine of the unity of God is real Hinduism, as that religion practiced by our ancestors, and as it is well-known even at the present age to many learned Brahmins.

We see Rammohun's double aim of defending and reforming in this statement of the purpose of his endeavours:

In order ... to vindicate my own faith and that of our forefathers, I have been endeavouring, for some time past, to convince my countrymen of the true meaning of our sacred books, and prove that my aberration deserves not the opprobrium which some unreflecting persons have been so ready to throw upon me. ... I expect to prove to my European friends that the superstitious practices which deform the Hindoo religion, have nothing to do with the pure spirit of its dictates.

In his time, Rammohun was reviled on both sides: he offended the orthodox Hindus and infuriated the Christian missionaries. It would seem, in theory, Rammohun's image of India contained all the ingredients for success. In actuality, though, his image, derived as it was from his renaissance theory, was not congenial to the claims of history as perceived by the widest sectors of Indian society. Most Indians placed a greater value on the post-Vedantic or Puranic forms of Hinduism, those "medieval excrescences" which Rammohun railed against. His condemnation of
idolatry, the principle rite of Purānic religion, displays an intolerance hardly conducive to winning converts:

Idolatry, as now practiced by our countrymen and which the learned Brahman so zealously supports as conducive to morality, is not only rejected by the Śāstras universally, but must also be looked upon with great horror by common sense, as leading directly to immorality and destructive of social comforts.49

Rammohun may be criticized for being too exclusive in the image of India he sought to bring to life, and too dogmatic in his theological claims. These same criticisms may be leveled at the image of the future that guided Rammohun's social reform activities: it was too idealistic and was not amenable to the realities of Indian life.

In 1828, Rammohun founded an organization to carry on his ideas of religion, worship and social reform. The Brahmo Sabha (Samāj) answered a need in the newly emerging class of Anglicized Indians to have a viable reference point in their own culture. There is also some reason to believe its creation was a response to the threat of Christian proselytization which was beginning to make converts among the alienated youth graduating from the colleges.50 In effect, Brahmoism became a new religion, neither wholly Hindu nor wholly Christian, though obviously much indebted to the latter.51 It was noted above that Rammohun had a special admiration for the precepts of Jesus. He felt, after studying the various religions of mankind, the "law that teaches that man should do unto others as he would wish to be done by ... is principally inculcated in Christianity."52 He believed all religions would benefit from separating out from the dogmatic assertions of that creed, its sum and substance which was:
... a simple code of religion and morality ... admirably calculated to elevate men's ideas to high and liberal notions of one God, who has equally subjected all living creatures, without distinction of caste, rank, or wealth, to change, disappointment, pain and death, and has equally admitted all to be partakers of the bountiful mercies which he has lavished over nature, and is also so well fitted to regulate the conduct of the human race in the discharge of their various duties to God, to themselves and to society ... .

As a new religion, Brahmoism tended to separate out and emphasize the hybrid nature of the English educated people who patronized it. The Samāj helped to seal the emerging solidarity of that transitional class. Again, this solidarity was neither here nor there -- truly a "mixed bag" of loyalties and ties. The Samāj also nurtured the growth of a nascent identity, uncertain of its future, but intent on experimenting with various combinations of its culturally hyphenated past.

Throughout its history, the Brahmo movement was divided within itself, attempting as it did to embrace two contradictory ideologies: a trans-cultural universalism (Rammohun founded a Unitarian Mission in 1821) and a strong Hindu bias. Because it reflected the unique problems of a minority group, its influence as a religious creed did not spread beyond its membership which did not include all of the English educated community. Under Rammohun's successor, Debendranath Tagore, who renounced the doctrine of the infallibility and eternality of the Vedas, the Samāj began to sever its ties with the mother religion. This process was completed and the movement severely weakened by Keshub Chandra Sen who, in 1872, declared that as a Brahmo, he was "... not a Hindu, not a Mussalman, not a Christian."
Swāmī Vivekānanda's images of India are far more complex and fully articulated than those of Rammohun Roy, reflecting as they do a response matured over two generations of unprecedented intellectual activity in the Indian community, and modified by the changing phases of the British-India relationship. A brief account of these changes and the effects they were productive of is necessary in order to understand Swāmī Vivekānanda's image for a new India.

The racist ideology defining British policy in India in the latter part of the 19th century placed a severe strain on relations between the two cultural communities. Racism was not just an abstract ideology fashioning cultural attitudes and causing a few Indians to experience psychological stress and identity crisis. It was a much more massively real force in the dynamics of the encounter, affecting more people than just the educated class. Racial prejudice manifested itself in the physical abuse of Indians in all stratas of society, abuses which usually went unpunished. It also had ramifications in the economic and political spheres where the institution of privilege for the ruling class severely limited the employment opportunities of the English educated Indian.

In connection with the latter, we find the ranks of the educated class had swollen considerably by the mid-eighties. McCully estimates there were about 60,000 graduates of English colleges by 1885, the majority of them being concentrated in the large urban centers of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Unemployment was a critical problem. Little opportunity existed for an educated Indian to obtain a job offering a
living salary and one which would also enable him to realize his full potential. He was often forced by extenuating circumstances to submit to performing menial tasks which he considered degrading. McCully records this description of the plight of the educated young man:

It is melancholy to see men who once appeared to receive their honors in the university convocation, now applying for some lowly-paid appointment, almost begging from office to office, from department to department, or struggling for the office of a petty practitioner, and after all this returning baffled and disheartened to a poverty-stricken home...

English schools trained thousands of young men every year for jobs in the professions or in Government. However, there was no position open in the Covenanted Civil Service for an Indian since top-ranking posts were reserved exclusively for the British. The injustice of the situation impressed itself upon the unemployed, as this excerpt from the Indian Spectator, 1883, reveals:

The native graduate sees the spectacle of thousands of foreigners monopolizing all the best places under the administration. He must be more than a man if he cannot feel for himself and his country. Whether the Government likes the truth or not, they must know that the educated native has learned to look upon himself as heir presumptive to the Collectorships or any of the numerous paid offices which have hitherto been so ably administered by foreign workers.

The unemployed expressed their displeasure and made demands upon the Government by means of the Press which by this time had grown to be a considerable force, helping as it did to forge a sense of solidarity within the educated community. English papers and Indian papers exchanged abuses and vilifications, the Indians demanding both equality in opportunity in the Government posts and before the law.
In the light of the unpunished acts of physical violence perpetrated by the Britishers against the Hindus, this latter demand became an especially emotional issue. The Indian Press eagerly published reports of crimes typically involving the death of the Hindu and only a severe reprimand, a fine or a short prison term for the Englishman. The issue was intensified by the defeat of the Ilbert Bill in 1883, an amendment proposed by Lord Ripon which would allow Indian judges to sit in trial for cases involving the crimes of Britishers. Bipin Chandra Pal, a commentator on contemporary events, attached much significance to this latter event as being "the straw that broke the camel's back": educated Indians began to despise the British, sever their ties of loyalty and identity, and seek a basis of unity and solidarity in their own culture which would enable them to expel the foreigner. Pal says:

The Ilbert Bill Controversy provoked a most violent and savage attack upon Hindu religions and social institutions by the spokesmen of the European community in India, one of the special privileges of whom was proposed to be taken away from them by this measure ... . This violent and prejudiced attack on Hindu religions and social institutions working on the universal contrariness of human nature, drove the Hindus to stand up boldly in defense of institutions which they had at one time regarded as irrational and hurtful and which they had been trying to reform. This was the psychological origin of the movement of social reaction and religious revival among the English educated Hindus in the eighties ... .

In the backwash of scorn, exclusiveness, and an increasing tension between the two inter-dependent cultural communities, the Indians turned away from the British, turned to defend the religion and the culture of their forefathers and began to talk about freeing themselves from the yoke of a foreign government which had taught them to love freedom and equality.
but refused to put these values into practice in India. Cultural, political and religious nationalism grew out of this new inspiration.

Liberated from the ties of identity with English culture, this highly emotional movement threatened to become ultra-reactionary, rejecting all that was foreign. When Swāmī Vivekānanda (1863-1902) entered into public life in 1893 this reversal had already permeated the upper classes and the cultural battle lines had been drawn. He perceived his role to be that of a synthesizer, to find a middle path between the two extremes of culturalism and Westernization that could stem the mounting fanaticism and reconcile Indians to the idea of accepting certain Western values which he discerned to be essential to the resurgence of India as a nation among equals. It will be seen he also conceived of himself as a synthesizer on a larger, international level. Vivekānanda's vision and his message were a call to the West to recognize the worth of certain Indian values -- her spiritual values -- and to accept and incorporate them into their national life just as India was assimilating Western values into hers.

Like Rammohun Roy, Swāmī Vivekānanda had a dual purpose, one involving India and Indians as seen through their own eyes, and another involving India and Indians as seen through the eyes of the world. Unlike Rammohun, however, Vivekānanda was intimately in touch with the realities of Indian life. He perceived that the only way to make change meaningful to a people committed to the past and tradition, was to interpret change in the context of Indian thought while at the same time avoiding any kind of exclusivism which might offend or alienate any segment of the population. The creed required an ethnocentrism that would make it amenable to the
claims of tradition and a universalism that would permit it to embrace both the diversity of religious custom in India itself as well as the various religious systems of the world.

In order to project his universal message of equality and toleration and fulfil his purpose to regenerate India and restore her dignity, Vivekananda appropriated the idea of the Golden Age of India and the image of India as a spiritual nation. He fused together these two sets of symbols making the Golden Age of India the result of the triumph of spirituality as a way of life in India. The force of the new myth lay in the creative manner in which Vivekananda adapted it to the claims of his own culture's history and to the demands of the present day. Basically, this new image of India revolved around (and depended upon for its validity) two fundamental presuppositions. The first of these was Vivekananda's belief in the Oneness of the universe and the divinity of man: in this universe there is but one Ultimate Reality and we are its very essence. The second related principle describes this Ultimate Reality as an Impersonal Being, a Supreme Intelligence that expresses itself through diversity: it evolves or projects out of itself "all the myriad things of the world," bestowing on each individual a distinct personality but not altering the spiritual essence of the individual which still partakes of the Oneness and attests to it by being conjoined to its diverse manifestations. These are the presuppositions of Advaita (Non-dual) Vedānta, a very old system of thought which, in Vivekananda's mind, traces its origin back to the Golden Age of Indian spirituality. Vivekananda's world view and his philosophy of history reflect a Neo-Vedāntism, coloured as the new system was by the experiences and values of a 19th century, English
educated Swāmī.

In his search for a new cultural identity for India, one that would be amenable to the claims of history and value, Vivekānanda was affirming the new status of India as a modern nation, or at least her right to become one. He was responding to the crisis of identity Indians felt because they were in transit between an old sense of identity localized in primordial ties and a new sense of identity which was an out-growth of their inner "demand to exist and have a name" as participants in a world culture. Becoming conscious of a wider community of international relationships and national aspirations, Indians required a national image, a fixed point of reference where they could locate a sense of personal identity presently threatening to dissolve in the expansiveness of the modern network of human associations. The new myth functioned as a model for that national image. By examining more closely the two Neo-Vedāntic presuppositions structuring the myth of the Spiritual Golden Age, the dynamics of Vivekānanda's form of classicism will become clear.

According to the Advaita (monistic) system, there lies beneath all diversity a basic unity, a sameness of essence knowing no ultimate distinction between the Impersonal Soul of the universe and the Soul within the individual. The theory rests on the sacred authority of the Upanishads of the Veda which Advaitins regard as the repository of eternal, uncreated truths discovered by the ancient sages of India. The essence of this teaching is found in the dictum, ॐ, ṭat  tvam asī, meaning, "That thou art,"That" referring to the macrocosmic Self, and "thou" referring to its microcosmic counterpart in the individual. In the following quotation we see how Vivekānanda interprets the idea of spiritual equality in terms
of universal brotherhood and the equality of all beings:

... all powers, blessing, purity, omnipresence, omniscience are buried in each soul. That is a grand idea we ought to remember. In every man and in every animal, however weak or wicked, great or small, resides the same omnipresent, omniscient soul. The difference is not in the soul but in the manifestation. Between me and the smallest animal the difference is only in manifestation, but as a principle he is the same as I am, he is my brother, he has the same soul as I have. This is the greatest principle that India has preached. The talk of the brotherhood of man becomes in India the brotherhood of universal life, of animals and of all life down to the little ants -- all these are our bodies.

Taking another of the famous Vedic passages, this one from the older Rig Veda, Vivekananda finds support for his belief in the equality of all religions as well as for the idea of universal religious toleration which should follow from such a belief. The quotation is from Rig Veda 1:164 and it reads: ekam sadviprā bahudhā vadanti, "That which exists is One; sages call It by various names." Vivekananda explains it:

You may be a dualist, and I may be a monist. You may believe that you are the eternal servant of God, and I may declare that I am one with God Himself; and yet both of us are good Hindus. How is that possible? Read then, ekam sadviprā bahudhā vadanti -- "That which exists is One; sages call it by various names." Above all others, my countrymen, this is the one grand truth that we have to teach the world. Even the most educated people of other countries turn up their noses at a forty-five degree angle and call our religion idolatry. I have seen that; and they never stopped to think what a mass of superstition there was in their own heads. It is still so everywhere, this tremendous sectarianism, the low narrowness of mind. The thing which a man has is the only thing worth having; the only life worth living is his own little life of dollar-worship and mammon-worship; the only little possession worth having is his own property, and nothing else. If he can manufacture a little clay nonsense or invent a machine, that is to be admired beyond the greatest possessions.
The reason for Vivekananda's emphasis on toleration may be discovered in his experience of intolerance and indignity in the hands of the Christian missionaries. He is very suggestive of this in another passage:

Monotheism like absolute monarchy is quick in executing orders, and a great centralisation of force, but it grows no farther, and its worst feature is its cruelty and persecution. All nations coming within its influence perish very soon ... .

In India the same problem presented itself -- the solution found -- ekam sadviprah bahudhā vadanti.

This is the keynote to everything which has succeeded, and the keystone of the arch.

The result is that wonderful toleration of the Vedântist.66

In the Advaita system, the differences to be found between men in terms of personality, mode of worship and belief are due to the level of understanding of the true nature of the universe attained by the individual. Realization of the Ultimate Truth is not a simple, intuitive matter. It requires effort and involves a process of spiritual progress from the lowest level of understanding to the highest. Consonant with their stage of spiritual evolution, individuals adopt a particular form of religion. One does not construe from this that one religion is wrong and the other is right. Rather, we are dealing here with various degrees of truth. All modes of worship are true and good; what may be the best path for one individual may be totally wrong for another:

As a fact, we find that there are so many sects in India, and at the same time we know this mysterious fact that these sects do not quarrel with each other. The Shaivite does not say that every Vaishnavite will be damned. The Shaivite says, this is my path, and you have yours; at the end we must come together. They all know that in India. This is the theory of the Ishta. It has been recognized in the most ancient times that there are various forms of worshipping God. It is also recognized that different natures require different methods. Your method of coming to God may not be my method, possibly it
might hurt me. Such an idea as there is but one way for everybody is injurious, meaningless, and entirely to be avoided. ... Mind you, we have no quarrel with any religion in the world. We have each our Ishta. But when we see men coming and saying, "This is the only way," and trying to force it on us in India ... we laugh at them. For such people want to destroy their brothers because they seem to follow a different path towards God -- for them to talk of love is absurd. Their love does not count for much. How can they speak of love who cannot bear another man to follow a different path from their own.67

Here Vivekānanda is extending the traditional meaning of Ishtadevātā, choice of your own form of worship, to include all religions, not just the Hindu sects, and is emphasizing again his plea for toleration. But he also wishes to make the point that there is a goal, there is such a thing as spiritual perfection to be discovered in the worship of the Impersonal, this being none other than the worship of man. Religion in India progressed through the stages of spiritual evolution, finally realizing perfection in the Advaita. Beginning with the worship of many gods, it arrived at the monotheistic idea at a very early period but "threw it aside, as it were, as a very primitive idea and went further on,"68 finally dissolving all dualistic theories in an all-embracing monism.

Vivekānanda utilized the Advaita tenets to prove the fundamental dignity of man (man is not fundamentally evil; in essence, he is the divine itself), to verify that the goal of the individual is to progress to spiritual perfection, and to prove that the natural outcome of belief in the monistic theory is not only universal toleration but also an active, "self-less" dedication to serving one's fellow man who is, in actuality, one's very self.69 Not only was this doctrine calculated to restore the dignity of Indians subjected to the degradation of the colonial relationship, but it was also designed to place a moral obligation upon the
individual to act for the welfare and uplift of the masses of Indian people. To Vivekananda, the poor of India symbolized the degeneration of Indian spirituality. Living a veritable death-in-life, they were "the dead bones of lost hope, activity, joy and courage." Finally, Vivekananda exhorted people to respond to the "stress of the divine within." A persistent theme throughout all his writings and addresses was the call to strength, to manliness and to faith in oneself, because a man who realized the divine within possessed by that knowledge the powers of omniscience and omnipotence, those special strengths of gods:

What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face. That is what we want, and that can only be created, established, and strengthened by understanding and realizing the ideal of the Advaita, that idea of the oneness of all. Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith, faith in God — this is the secret of greatness.

Adhering to the renaissance view of history, Vivekananda fell within the tradition of the Orientalists. But he was also indebted to the humanitarian nationalists, a group of 18th century philosophers who believed each cultural group was endowed with a unique personality which should be cultivated, but not at the expense of other cultural groups. These two ideas Vivekananda combined into Neo-Vedântism, drawing upon the traditional Indian ideas of the cyclic pattern of the universe and the ancient Sâňkhya philosophy which described the evolution and devolution of the universe in terms of progress towards spiritual perfection. The latter idea about cultural personality he interpreted in terms of the unity-diversity theme: just as an individual has his own path to perfection, so also should each
nation which is just a larger, corporate manifestation of the divine essence. Thus Vivekananda believed there was a universal plan revealing itself in the organization of the various cultures. The personality of each country is its genius, its source of greatness, and the design or law of the universe required each culture or nation to communicate its secret of success to the others so all would benefit from the various manifestations of divine: perfection:

Each race ... has a peculiar bent, each race has a peculiar raison d'être, each race has a peculiar mission to fill in the life of the world. Each race has to make its own result, to fulfil its own mission. Political greatness or military power is never the mission of our race; it never was, and, mark my words, it never will be. But there has been the other mission given to us, which is to conserve, to preserve, to accumulate, as it were, into a dynamo, all the spiritual energy of the race, and that concentrated energy is to pour forth in a deluge on the world whenever circumstances are propitious. Let the Persian or the Greek, the Arab, or the Englishman march his battalions, conquer the world, and link the different nations together, and the philosophy and spirituality of India is ever ready to flow along the new-made channels into the veins of the nations of the world. The Hindu's calm brain must pour out its own quota to give to the sum total of human progress. India's gift to the world is the light spiritual.73

The teleological explanation appears in this passage:

We Hindus have now been placed under God's providence, in a very critical and responsible position. The nations of the West are coming to us for spiritual help. A great moral obligation rests on the sons of India to fully equip themselves for the work of enlightening the world on the problems of human existence.74

This is the law of give and take and India must follow its full dictates. She has something great to give, but she also has much to learn. In this address delivered in South India, we see Vivekananda's subtle endorsement
of Western values:

... spirituality is what you have to teach the world. Have we to learn anything else, have we to learn anything from the world? We have, perhaps, to gain a little in material knowledge, in the power of organization, in the ability to handle powers, organizing powers, in bringing the best results out of the smallest causes. This perhaps to a certain extent we may learn from the West. ... perhaps some sort of materialism, toned down to our own requirements, would be a blessing to many of our brothers who are not yet ripe for the highest truths.\(^\text{75}\)

History demonstrated that when people obeyed the law of give and take, remaining open and flexible in relationships with others, they became great. When they forgot to give or refused to take, their civilization declined steadily and its genius became obscured or debased. In religious terms, the cultural group lost the perspective of unity-in-diversity, of the constant "flow" or recognition of the Self of one in the Self of others:

The sign of life is expansion; we must go out, expand, show life, or degrade, fester, and die. ... One of the great causes of India's misery and downfall has been that she narrowed herself ... and refused to give her jewels and treasures to the other races of mankind... . That has been the one great cause; that we did not go out, that we did not compare notes with other nations. ... Therefore we must go out, and the secret of life is to give and take.\(^\text{76}\)

According to Vivekānanda's philosophy of history, India's genius was and still is her spirituality. Once she gave freely of herself to all the cultures of the world:

Once in far remote antiquity, the Indian philosophy, coming in contact with Greek energy, led to the rise of the Persian, the Roman, and other great nations. After the invasion of Alexander the Great, these two great waterfalls colliding with each other,
deluged nearly half of the globe with spiritual tides such as Christianity. Again, a similar commingling, resulting in the improvement and prosperity of Arabia, laid the foundation of modern European civilization. And perhaps, in our own day, such a time for the conjunction of these two gigantic forces has presented itself again. This time their center is India.77

The cause of India's decline was her withdrawal into herself; the only way she could be regenerated would be by expanding, by accepting from the West what it had to offer in the knowledge of things material. India needed technology, she had to learn how to be a little more aggressive and she had to master the techniques of effective organization. It then would fall upon India to reciprocate by giving to the West some of India's spirituality which she had been hoarding for centuries. In the following passage Vivekananda calls upon the authority of a cultural ancestor, Manu, the ancient law-giver. He expands one of Manu's precepts to include the experience of Indians in the 19th century faced with the necessity of accepting the ideas of foreigners:

With all my love for India, and with all my patriotism and veneration for the ancients, I cannot but think that we have to learn many things from other nations. We must be always ready to sit at the feet of all, for, mark you, everyone can teach us great lessons. Says our great law-giver, Manu: "Receive some good knowledge even from the low-born, and even from the man of lowest birth learn by service the road to heaven." We, therefore, as true children of Manu, must obey his commands and be ready to learn ... . At the same time we must not forget that we have also to teach a great lesson to the world. ... That we did not go out to compare things with other nations, did not mark the workings that have been all around us, has been the one great cause of this degradation of the Indian mind. We have paid the penalty; let us do it no more. ... The first manifest effect of life is expansion. You must expand if you want to live. The moment you have ceased to expand, death is upon you, danger is ahead.78
Openness to new ideas, flexibility, innovative assimilation and expansiveness — these were the hallmarks of greatness, for such ideals were in harmony with a universe ever expanding towards perfection:

The watchword and the essence (of life) have been preached in the days of yore when the Vedântic truth was first discovered, the solidarity of all life. One atom in the universe cannot move without dragging the whole world along with it. There cannot be any progress without the whole world following in the wake .... Every idea has to become broad till it covers the whole of this world, every aspiration must go on increasing till it has engulfed the whole of humanity, nay, the whole of life, within its scope.\textsuperscript{79}

The Golden Age of India envisioned by Vivekananda encompassed a wide span of history during which time India was developing her spirituality. It began about 8000 to 9000 years ago\textsuperscript{80} when the Aryans discovered those truths recorded in the Veda. From crude speculation where the light of spirituality was just a spark, the sages of India, men of subtle intellect and penetrating insight, gradually uncovered the ultimate mystery of the universe, namely, its unity. This Advaita became the governing principle of the national life and it was strong, inventive and preeminently spiritual, constantly giving of itself and assimilating the Self of others. Spirituality became the life-blood of the nation:

"That which exists is One; sages call It by various names." The whole history of India you may read in these few words. The whole history has been a repetition in massive language, with tremendous power, of that one central doctrine. It was repeated in the land till it had entered into the blood of the nation, till it began to tingle with every drop of blood that flowed in its veins, till it became one with the life, part and parcel of the material of which it was composed; and thus the land was transmuted into the most wonderful land of toleration, giving the right to welcome the various religions as well as all sects into the old mother-country.\textsuperscript{81}
India must always be a spiritual nation: to forsake the genius which made her great would cause her death. In order to have a resurgence, then, India must consult her cultural ancestors. She must not try to imitate others and seek to become something she is not, but she must also take care not to become fanatic in her revitalizing program:

We have to find our way between the Scylla of old superstitious orthodoxy and the Charybdis of materialism -- of Europeanism, of soullessness, of the so-called reform -- which has penetrated to the foundation of Western progress. ... In the first place, we cannot become Westerns; therefore, imitating the Westerns, is useless. Suppose you can imitate the Westerns, that moment you will die, you will have no more life in you. In the second place, it is impossible. A stream is taking its rise, away beyond where time began, flowing through millions of ages of human history; do you mean to get hold of that stream and push it back to its source, to a Himalayan glacier? Even if that were practicable, it would not be possible for you to be Europeanized. If you find that it is impossible for the European to throw off a few centuries of culture which there is in the West, do you think it is possible for you to throw off the culture of shining scores of centuries? It cannot be.

In his view of time, Vivekananda followed Rammohun Roy, perceiving the universe as a unity with respect to the time dimension of his own cultural group. Having established a dependency relationship, he appealed to the authority of the forefathers who had founded the cultural "family" -- the ancestors par excellence. They belonged to the illud tempus and it was through their creative genius that the culture achieved greatness.

Vivekananda constructed from the past a model for India's regeneration. By making the values of the modern world view appear to be those of the ancestors who built a Golden civilization, he provided a rationale for discarding moribund values and for "reclaiming" the original, dynamic.
values and goals of the forefathers. His inclusive image of India's
Golden Age was more compatible with the religious propensities of the
Indian people as a whole than was Rammohun's for even though a value
judgement was involved, it was not a condemning one.

A new cultural identity was designed by Vivekananda to diminish the
shame and inferiority felt by Indians in the face of a foreign culture
which appeared in many ways to be obviously superior. This identity was
calculated to instil confidence by altering the individual's perspective
on the relationship between India and the new world culture. Indians
discovered India had an individuality, a genius latent in her personality
which the world was waiting to receive. No longer must she sit at the
feet of the Westerners and humbly "plead and beg ... crying, 'Give, give,'
...': she now had a mission to humanity, something to contribute to the
world that was essential to the progress of humanity and which only she
could give. Vivekananda candidly suggested Indian spirituality was the
key to the future of the world.

Although Vivekananda's image of India was more commendable to
Indians than was Rammohun's, it was only moderately successful as an
instrument of change. The spiritual India myth captured the imagination
of many Indians and it has been incorporated, to a certain extent, into
the national image projected onto the world by Indians. But the con­
fidence which was to be instilled by this new identity and which was to
inspire Indians to selfless service of the nation's poor, did not
materialize. Vivekananda wanted to create an organization of dedicated
young people who would work among the poor and help uplift them through
education. To this end, he established the Rāmakrishna Mission, named in
honor of his guru, Rāmakrishṇa Paramahāmsa, and modeled after Christian Missionary organizations. But instead of activating a dynamic, spiritual energy Vivekānanda's fiery enthusiasm only produced a complacent, spiritual pride among the upper class "moderns" whom he wanted to mobilize. His apparent victory in the West,83 so much publicized in India, helped restore their dignity and self-respect, but his message of equality could not penetrate the barriers of caste exclusiveness.
CHAPTER IV. THE INDIAN RESPONSE TO NINETEENTH CENTURY BRITISH ATTITUDES: CULTURAL CLASSICISM AND THE SEARCH FOR CULTURAL IDENTITY

The earliest formal class of English educated Indians were the graduates of Hindu College, an institution established in 1816 by a group of wealthy, upper-caste Hindus who wished to send their sons to a college that would teach them both Indian and European subjects, the latter especially since it would prove lucrative for the family.

2 Morearty, pp. 31-32.

3 The English educated community, as a group separated from the native intelligentsia, came into existence, so to speak, around 1820. At least, this was when they became a vocal group. They were as yet an extremely small group of people, perhaps numbering in the few hundreds, and they clustered around the urban centers, especially Calcutta, where the Orientalist colleges were established.

4 B. T. McCully, English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism, 1940, p. 223.

5 See above, Chapter II, p. 17.

6 Calcutta Review, 1871, quoted in McCully, p. 219.

7 McCully, pp. 219-220.


9 Quoted in Kopf, p. 208.

10 Many proved unable to cope with their self-imposed cultural exile and of these, many turned to alcoholism and some few found comfort by converting to a highly spiritual form of Christianity. See Kopf, p. 258 and p. 262.

11 Levenson, p. 150.

12 Ibid., p. 150.


14 Levenson, p. 150.

15 Morearty, p. 34.
16I follow here Morearty's use of the term "myth" in describing these images of the past: "They are both myths in no special technical sense, simply in that they are large-scale, fundamental, public explanations or accounts in terms of which those who thought and spoke them understood and dealt with the total situation in which they found themselves ... The crucial characteristic which makes past events part of a "myth" as I shall use the term, is not whether or not they happened, but whether or not they are perceived as possessing a continuing validity ...". Ibid., p. 1.

17The term "cultural classicist" is Von Grunebaum's. He describes this kind of classicist as one who engages in "cultural classicism," which he defines as "... a cultural aspiration ... having four constituents: (1) a past (or merely an alien) phase of cultural development is recognized as a complete and perfect realization of human potentialities; (2) this realization is appropriated as a legitimate inheritance or possession; (3) the possibility is admitted that the present may be recast in terms of past (or alien) perfection; (4) the aspiration of the past (or alien) culture phase is accepted as exemplary and as binding on the present." Ibid., p. 73.


20Von Grunebaum, p. 76.

21Ibid., pp. 80-83.

22Ibid., p. 93.

23Kopf, p. 9.

24See the population-education tables in McCully, pp. 178-179. For example, in 1881 in Bengal, the number of educated natives was estimated at 16,639 out of a total population of 69,536,861.


28Dividing the century thus is greatly simplifying if not over-simplifying a very complex response to cultural encounter. There were adamant defenders of traditional Hinduism among the English educated community in the first phase, just as there were ardent advocates of westernization in the second phase.

30 Kopf, p. 9.


32 Morearty, p. 23.


36 "Rammohun never participated ... in any of the Orientalist institutions promoting educational reform. Recent studies have proved that he was not involved in the establishing of the Hindu College." Kopf, p. 198.

37 The most recent manifestation of this type of cultural pride, which is just as much alive today in India as it was a century ago (a fact which reveals the intensity of the national identity crisis felt by Indian scholars), is a mammoth collection of articles entitled *India's Contribution to World Thought and Culture* (705 pp.) The title page states that it is "Dedicated to all the known and unknown Acharyas who carried The Message of Mother India to very corner of the World through the Ages." It seems the myths of the Indian Golden Age and Indian spirituality have been combined in a new myth that has international proportions, namely, the Myth of Mother India, the Source of World Culture.


40 Morearty, p. 59.


See Farquhar, p. 34 for a description of the worship service of the Brahmo Samaj. It bears a striking resemblance to a Christian service, including in its program hymn singing and a sermon on the Vedanta.

The writings of Mill and Spencer were standard texts in the English school system.

Born Narendranath Datta, he took the name Vivekananda upon initiation into the order of śākyāins (monks).

Vivekananda concurs with this traditional belief in the eternal, uncreated nature of the Veda. See The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, III, 1964, pp. 118-119. (Hereafter, the series is referred to as CWSV.)
Vivekananda spent about half of his period of public life in England and America where he established Vedanta societies and taught Indian philosophy and religious practices. Though it is debatable that he created a spiritual catyclysm in the West, as was reported in Indian newspapers, he most certainly had some success in making converts. In any event; what was important was Indians believed he had conquered the West with Indian spirituality.
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