Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of changes

Locksley Hall: Tennyson:
CHAPTER I

SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN INDIA ON THE
EVE OF PLANNING

Any study of social change will have to reckon with the social structure from which the changes begin to take shape. Although this may not be possible in all cases to begin with the substratum of social structure at empirical level, some analytical substratum must be implied so in order to study the changes that are taking place. The chapter tries to present the basic social-structural features with reference to the Indian social system. Naturally the chapter begins with the recapitulation of the philosophical groundings of the Indian social structure. An analysis of these principles would give a clear view of the social system that had been evolving all through the ages. So the question naturally comes to the fore: What are the philosophical principles that guide the destiny of the social system in India? What are the invariable points in this connection? What or which aspects of these principles or cultural values are changing?

Then an attempt is made in this chapter to present the philosophical foundations of Hinduism—their change, invariable points,—till India attained independence and opted for economic development and planning.

Consequently the chapter is sketchy—which could not
have been otherwise-comparing the vast stretch of time referred to and the complexity of institutions touched upon.

The following important points are dealt with in this chapter: the philosophical foundations of Hinduism, the purushartha, the social debts, the caste system, village system, the positive content of Hinduism, the changing nature of dharma, the impact of Islam, the rise of middle class and the establishment of industry under British, the rise of national movement and finally the independence, the opting for planning and economic development. All through an emphasis is laid on tradition and change, re-evaluation and consolidation etc.

It is said, in India, that philosophy "originated under the pressure of a practical need arising from the presence of moral and physical evil in life." The endeavour was directed towards finding out the remedies for the ills of life¹. As such the Hindu cosmogony developed to answer the problems of life on earth. The Vedas and Upanishads are treasure-houses of the

philosophical endeavours of Hinduism.

The cosmological speculations began with the founding of order or rta in the universe. In ethics, rta became truth and boxta rta became untruth. Whatever contributes to the understanding of truth is vidya and whatever is transitory is avidya or untruth. Knowledge is divided into para which is higher and apara which is lower relating to the empirical world. Proceeding further two more terms, which are important for the foundations of Indian Philosophy came into vogue. They are Brahman and atman. Brahman came to be regarded as entire universe, the root meaning being brh, the first prayer, "to burst forth," or "to grow". The initial meaning of atman was that of "breath," but, later on came to be regarded as "soul or self of a living being". Finally they both came to be regarded as one.

The individual soul is called jiva and from the non-duality principle, the individual is not different from Brahman. The soul is encompassed by body and mind (manas). Mind is the source for all the feelings such as desire, love, etc., which is the

basis for all psychological problems. In the
Upanishadic thought the soul is not born with the
body, but, it is indestructible, absolute and
imperishable. But the soul is in bondage in the
mortal body. In order to release the soul from this
mortal bondage, theory of karma is devised as a
vehicle. By good karma one can release the soul
from life and death cycle which is moksha or salva-
tion. Whatever leads to moksha is good and whatever
keeps away from it is evil. By fixing up the goal
of human existence as moksha, the caste system is
devised as a way of life on earth.

The transcendental value of moksha is trans-
formed into definite rules of conduct and code of
life. Thus a man has to pursue four purushartha,
or
pursuits of life: they are dharma, artha, kama and
moksha. Dharma is virtuous life, artha, worldly
things and kama enjoyment or gratification. And moksha
is the final release of worldly entanglements. These
pursuits are to be fulfilled in four stages of life,
viz., Brahmacharya or learning of knowledge, Grahasthya
or family life, Vanaprastha or life in forest slowly
disentangling from life, and finally leading to
complete renunciation or Sanyasa. These are the
different stages of life one has to undergo although
one can skip in exceptional cases.
The four-fold caste system is devised to organize the group life. Thus Brahmans are the possessors of knowledge and Vedic rites and are on the top. Kshatriyas are the protectors of life and property and Vaiśyas are traders and agriculturists. The Sudras are the servants of the above three. By doing right karma one can pass off into the next higher stage in the next life which is a part of the theory of transmigration of souls. Manu and Kautilya have codified social life and political economy respectively. These are the basic documents controlling the life of a Hindu. The duties of a king and the rules of administration are given in a detailed manner in these documents.

The basic unit of Indian administration is the village. The village is supposed to be the self-sufficient unit. The village is ruled by the panchayat or village assembly. The caste and village systems gave security and stability in economic, political and social aspects. It is said that a sort

3 For an idea of Manu and Kautilya see K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, "Manu and Kautilya (Social and Political Thought)," in Ibid., pp. 107-116.

of elite combination took place by the two upper castes coming together to exploit the lowest castes. The transcendental values and the nature of the caste system leads to such an understanding. On the basis of rigidity of caste it is quite often said that Indian philosophy was permeated with other worldiness only. But systems have developed such as Carvaka philosophy completely negating the six famous philosophical schools of Hindus who in one way or the other emphasized the "moksha" concept as final salvation. No wonder this philosophical school was denounced lock, stock and barrel. In spite of its otherworldliness there is an element of positivism in Hindu approach toward social life on earth. They very idea of God was thrown out and in its place kept matter as supreme.

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6For an extended idea of positivism see Benoy Kumar Sarker, THE POSITIVE BACKGROUND OF HINDU SOCIOLOGY, Book I: Introduction to Hindu Positivism, (Allahabad: Panini Office, 1937), pp.631-667, also for the development of Hindu political ideals and
The emphasis on the transcendental and the superiority of the Brahmin, is a tell-tale story to maintain the stratification systems intact. Science, arts and crafts developed, but they too were subjugated to the interests of the stratification system by putting a premium on the eternal Brahman, transmigration of souls and the emphasis on duty through dharma. The plausible explanation seems to be that stratification controlled the development of philosophical ideals too. Despite the rumblings on the philosophical level, and the relative importance of dharma as duty, and transmigration of souls, the Hindu view of life has changed through centuries by absorbing the new and adjusting itself to the new conditions. The suppleness to change is the next part of the chapter.

The Concept of Dharma: It has already been stated that the central goals of Hindu society are four purushartha or pursuits viz., Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Moksha is transcendental and all the rest are oriented towards this goal at the end of the life cycle. Moksha is the resolution from birth and death cycle. The rest of three are important for the

posivism see K.P.Mukerji "Hindu Positivism," Journal of the University of Bombay, XXIII New Series (History and Economics & Sociology: No.45), pp.55-81. There is an element of polemics in Mukerji's article, nevertheless, it is objective.
sociological study. Our concern in the next sections will be around the first three.

The pursuit of Dharma, Artha and Kama are the very basis of Hindu view of life. All individuals are oriented towards these goals. Thus individuals' motivations are related to the community social structure. In the pursuit of these goals an individual will have played his role in the social system.

Dharma has evaluational aspect, artha cognitive aspect, and kama the cathetic aspect of individual's motivational orientations. The different significances of Dharma will be explored.

It is difficult to define the exact meaning of dharma but its usage at different levels will make it clear. Dharma is formed from the root of dh meaning that which holds or maintains. From this meaning it would be clear that every "form of life and every group of men have got their dharma."  

In the context of Hindu view of social life these worldly aspects are taken into consideration with reference to the ultimate goal of life viz., Moksha or salvation. These three aspects constitute Hindu view of social life.

"Now, the whole material and moral universe with which the individual has to deal in this world is classified by the Hindu into three big realms viz., Dharma, Artha, and Karma, and ideal needs, material needs, and the needs of sense or the moral, material and the sensual needs of man; or the needs of the soul, the needs of material prosperity, and psychobiological needs of the flesh. In modern terminology, these are the three principal motivating forces or urges or drives around which the whole life is conceived and formulated in terms of these three, with reference to the ultimate end of life viz., Moksha."

From the individual's point of view dharma suggests the motivational order\(^9\), which is incumbent upon the individual to learn through socialization process and internalize it in the performance of roles.

The first aim of social life is the possession


\(^9\)For an extensive motivational analysis see Parsons, SOCIAL SYSTEM, pp.29-33; 36-45; 12-15.
of material goods. This knowledge comes about by knowing what is meant by cognition.

"With reference to the external world, artha, in its widest connotation, signifies "that which can be perceived, and object of the sense:" with reference to the interior world of the psyche: "aim, purpose, object, wish, desire, motive, cause, reason, interest, use, want, and concern:" and as the last member of the compound, --artha: "for the sake of, on behalf of, for, intended for." The term thus bundles together all the meanings of i) the object of human pursuit, ii) the means of the pursuit, and iii) the needs and the desire suggesting this pursuit."10"

Kama is the desire incarnate and hence it is the cathexis which the individual has to learn in arranging his orientations to all objects. Actually there is not much difference between cognitive and cathexis aspects of individual orientations11.

The cognitive and cathetic aspects are defined and the place of dharma is already given. It is a balance of the two. Dharma keeps the individual orientations to artha and kama in equilibrium. Hence it has its evaluatory significance.

"Dharma seems to be the arbiter, the conscience keeper, the director, the interpreter, of the properties that govern the


right functioning and management of the relations between the inner man and the outer man, and between the individual and the group. Dharma is, therefore, the holder of the balance in terms of which artha and kama have to be dealt with, weighed, practised and apportioned

The motivations of an individual are related to the role-playing in a social system. The above definition gives the motivational orientation of the individual. How then he is related to the group or to the larger community? In his interactions with other alters, an ego is bound to face the problems of adjustment and stability of interaction. These interactional problems are managed with group dharma or social dharma


Cf. Balasubrahmanyam defined: "It [dharma] is conceived in a social sense, so as to compromise the duties incumbent on the units of the social system. In its political context, it refers to the administrative laws of a country and to the obligations of an individual to a state and vice versa. As an essential ideal, Dharma means "the good." In its religious significance, it stands for the righteousness or the dignity which lies deep in our being. Dharma is equity: it is self-oriented action. It stands for the fundamental rights and the duties of an individual in a state." See M.D. Balasubrahmanyam, "Dharma in a Democracy," Unpublished M.S., (Ceylon: Jaffna College, 1960).

Thoothi concludes, for example: "Thus Dharma becomes the instrument for the fulfillment of life
Different connotations at which dharma is used may be summarised: 'Astumbha dharma' (family law); 'Vrutti dharma' (occupational code); 'Raja dharma' (political order); 'Kula dharma' (caste order); 'Hindu dharma' (Hindu social order); 'Nyaya dharma' (legal code); 'Prayashchitta dharma' (law of retribution); 'Manava dharma' (law of man); 'Bhrutya dharma' (duty of a servant); 'Aaura dharma' (duties of a citizen); 'Yuddha dharma' (rules and regulations of war); 'Veera dharma' (duties of a hero); etc.

Dharma with its wider connotations, has a capacity to change. It changes from time to time and from age to age. What is dharma to one is adharma (wrong) to the other. With its innumerable implications dharma is related to time. This aspect of dharma will be taken in the following sections.

In terms of an inner peace, and an outer order, in terms of social, religious and economic organization and control. In terms like these Dharma records the traditional sanctions of a socio-religious nature, wherein the material and cultural heritage from experience, history, tradition and usage, are gathered into one focus. In yet another sense, Dharma may be said to be a search for the solution of the problem of human freedom in terms of social relations with reference to the ideals of life. If Dharma concerns itself with the loyalties of personal, social, economic and spiritual relations that bind man to each of them, and to all of them as a related whole, Dharma concerns itself with the theory and practice of the right and the just in human affairs." N.A. Thoothi, Op.Cit., p.63.
When dharma fails "God proclaims through a holy man". The implications of dharma are too many.

But one should follow dharma as far as possible as he can understand. Dharma too changes with changing times. When it is changed dharma is newly "proclaimed." There is an inherent "elasticity" in dharma for change.\(^{14}\)

Dharma is related to the individual motivations. It connotes duties, rights, obligations and is finally related to the social order. The connotation of the term is almost universalistic with specifications and ubiquitous in its nature. It begins with the laws of Cosmos and ends up with the rights and duties of the individual, thus bringing together the Hindu view of cosmogyny and its impingement on the behaviour of man. Thus the Hindu social system is permeated with dharma of cosmos as well as its repercussions on the individual dharma.

As the Hindu social order is essentially a caste


\(\Theta\)f. "Dharma is to fail just before the end of the world, but will endure as long as the universe endures; and each participates in its power as long as he plays his role. The word implies not only a universal law by which the Cosmos is governed and sustained, but also particular laws, or inflections of "the law," which are natural to each species or modification of existence." Henrich Zimmer, Op.Cit., p.163.
system, the bearing of dharma gives a static look on the stratification of castes. But not withstanding the mysterious belief and awe about dharma it changed from time to time and age to age. Thus the proclamation of Lord Sri Krishna in Bhagavad Gita, "that God descends to Earth to establish dharma in each age," should be taken as the recognition of changing nature of dharma. In the following sections, the changes in artha and kama and by implication and the changes in dharma are discussed under British rule. The changes in the caste structure, the economy (artha), and through the organization of the village and the development of modern industry, the rise of middle class through western education and finally the development of national movement to overthrow the British to gain independence.

As has already been pointed out, with the development of Dharmastra school, the alliance of Kshatriya and Brahmans took place. This alliance and mutual support has had its repercussion on the social fabric. Firstly Brahmans supported the power of the Kshatriya. And secondly Brahmans who were expected to be ascetic and non-acquisitive type turned into acquisitive type. This had serious repercussions on the social structure. The newly
Formed nobility became oppressive on the productive castes, viz., Vaisyas and Sudras. The Imperial State grew in its splendour and extent. The burden was to be borne by a small percent of the population. To maintain this splendour and grandeur, the state resorted to taxation which was oppressive and unproductive. If this is the state of affairs what are the repercussions?

Recourse should be made to the values which have been handed over by tradition. The Gita (Bhagavad-gita) goes to teach that one should have "renunciation through action". What would be the effect of this saying on the oppressive burden of the State on the productive castes? Kautilya's supreme emphasis on wealth and its use on charity and

15 This type of analysis is found in P. G. Gokhale, INDIAN THOUGHT THROUGH THE AGES, (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1961), and especially the chapter on "Artha" pp.49-75.

16 Sukranitisara urges people to acquire wealth. "It is also necessary for charity. Without these what is the good of existence for man?" It further states that "one should carefully preserve wealth which can maintain him in future. So long as there is wealth, one is respected by all. But the man without wealth, though well-qualified, is deserted even by his wife and sons. In this world, wealth is the means to all pursuits. Let him, therefore, try to acquire wealth in legitimate ways, as by learning, service, valour, agriculture, commerce, the practice of crafts and even by mendicancy. Swing to insufficiency of wealth, people occasionally become slavers of others." And finally "the accumulation of wealth and learning should be made even by grains and moments. The man who is desirous of acquiring both shall neglect neither the grains nor the moment because they are trifling". Ibid.,p.54.
religious acts, slowly turned into dead words. The entire concept of acquisition of wealth transformed into a fatalistic concept.

The end of Gupta period and the beginning of Mughal period in Indian history was considered to be the period of social crises. Such periods naturally have adverse effects on the concept of wealth acquisition.

"These crises also helped sacerdotalism become triumphant with its triumph the tradition of artha as a secular and acquisitive tradition yielded place to the tradition of non-acquisition and renunciation." 

Thus the social-structural conditions of the social system reflected back on the spiritual and philosophical values, and gave them a peculiar meaning which was not there:

"The social ideas reflected the economic reality which was rationalized and glorified through the instrumentality of concepts of non-acquisition and renunciation. When the ideal of nivritti-renunciation prevailed over that of pravritti-active endeavour, wealth and its enjoyment there was a revaluation of values and the balance was decidedly in favour of the next world rather than this."

17 Ibid., p. 64.
18 Ibid., p. 68.
Thus interpretation of "low social status and poverty" have combined into a powerful dogma to explain the domination of the upper strata.

Even in the case of Kama, the expressive orientations of action was forced to subservce the interests of the exploiting nobility. To give an explanation and convincing arguments for the existence of this "elite" (vide supra), the expressive symbols and other manifestations were also condemned:

"The condemnation of the fine arts of dramatics and other creative arts as socially inferior led to their inevitable decline and this was the penalty paid by the popular arts for the supremacy of priestly tradition."

The ascending nobility or elite did not mince words to establish its supremacy. For that the philosophical arguments too were not spared. These arguments served as handmaids. Thus Karma which was action-oriented became kama the fatalistic.

The social structure is based on the value orientations. But the social structure, too, in its turn, forces the values to change according to the reality. An interaction on both sides is possible, influencing each other. The social structure thus of

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19Ibid., p.81. Emphasis added. See the excellent chapter on "Kama", pp.76-92.
dharma, artha, kama, and moksha based on karma or activity had fallen into disrepute and the emphasis shifted to moksha, renunciation and fatalism.

Till the arrival of British, the predominant concept of karma as a fatalism worked its way through centuries and through the invasions of Muslims. But with the advent of British slowly the concept acquired a new meaning swinging to the other side by becoming active. The re-examination began with the impact of western ideas.

"This trend [fatalistic trend] continued down the centuries until there began the impact of the West under which there was a re-examination and reinterpretation of the concept of karma when the fatalistic aspect came to be increasingly rejected, at least among the intelligentsia, and karma as a call to endeavour came into increasing prominence."20

With the British two sets of conditions developed one favouring this re-examination in the light of new ideas and the other as an adverse effect on the village economy. These are often termed as negative and positive aspects of British rule. With the oppressive peasant taxation and the competition of machine made goods with that of village produced goods, the rural economy groaned and

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collapsed. But with the establishment of industry and urbanization there developed a class which finally led the national movement to wrest independence from the British.

The first effect was that of the development of communications which even helped to break down the social barriers, such as travel in railways. The opening up of the vast countryside with railway network stimulated the growth of the economy. For the first time India came under one Central Government. And the laws too were the same throughout India. The introduction of English brought the middle classes under the influence of western thought. Three types of effects were brought about by the British. Firstly a small section of intelligentsia grew up with the western education and alienated themselves from the rest of the people. The second effect was that reformist movements such as Brahm Samaj came into existence, to synthesize Hindu and Christian thought. The third reaction was that of fear and it produced militant nationalism. "They deeply felt the need of standing on the ancient ways.

22Ibid., p.481.
and the militant orthodoxy which they developed combined readily with—and indeed inspired—the new nationalism, to produce a mighty spiritual force. The following sections are devoted to the development of middle class and its development.

The industrial revolution radically changed the economy of India. India could no more export the traditional goods which she had hitherto produced. The machine-made goods are cheap and reliable. Adding to that the British policy of tariffs slowly squeezed out the Indian artisan from the market. In addition to that with the establishing of British paramountcy in India, the initial beneficial effects turned out to be a source rather than a help. The English grip on the entire economic and political situation was complete and repressive.

This octopus hold did not allow Indians to share the administration or other jobs, even if they were to be educated. The situation was summarised as

"A deadly pall hung over India, under which the classes were smothered and the masses

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23 Ibid., pp. 485-486
breathed with difficulty. The Muslim and Hindu ruling princes were disarmed and isolated: the Muslim and Hindu families, tribes and castes which had provided soldiers, administrators and leaders, were ostracised from offices of responsibility, and condemned to serve as helots: the Muslim and Hindu learned classes were deprived of patronage and slowly squeezed out of their vocations. So far as the masses were concerned, excessively heavy assessments, severity of realisation, growth of population, and the pressure upon land depressed the miserable standards of living of the peasants, while the economic policies of the rulers brought ruin upon Indian artisans and craftsmen, so that many of them sank to the position of landless labourers, while the obstacles placed in the way of industrial development prevented the creation of fresh avenues of employment...... It was perhaps necessary that in order that the new might be born, the old should suffer an agonising and violent death\textsuperscript{25}.

The final sentence is significant of the coming struggle and the development of national consciousness.

The challenge was accepted partially. The cultural synthesis too developed with it. The dilemma and the acceptance of the challenge is described as follows:

\textsuperscript{25}Hinduism was indeed faced with a crisis of culture. It arose from British Policy to build, on the foundation of a traditionally caste-ridden agricultural society, an educational, legal, and political system which had in the West resulted basically from the Industrial Revolution and a flexible social system. It was difficult

\textsuperscript{25}Ibid.,p.337.
for Indians to make a choice. The acceptance of the Western concept of social mobility constituted a real challenge to Brahminism and the exclusive concept of its caste order. Its rejection, on the other hand, involved the negation of British rule and a reversal of what that rule had achieved over a period of more than 100 years. The aim of revivalism was to restore Brahminism in a modified form by an exclusion of British rule and the influences that operated under it. To revivalists political liberty was essential for cultural and religious freedom.\textsuperscript{26}

In contrast to the West, in India, middle classes arose due to changes brought about "in the system of law and public administration than in economic development, and they mainly belonged to learned profession.\textsuperscript{27} There were no middle classes before the coming of British\textsuperscript{28}. Land-reforms too


\textsuperscript{27}Ibid., p.v.

\textsuperscript{28}Although guild system was prevalent before the advent of British "the immobility of caste organization and the despotism of bureaucracy precluded" the development of middle class since the stratified order was based not on "freedom to move in social space and being conscious of a superior status based on the superiority of the values acquired." They were in water-tight status compartments. "They could not form themselves into unitary middle-class social order comparable to that of western countries." Revolts against such an order were negligible and insignificant. Land being the sole means of livelihood the status system is maintained by strictly allowing the inheritance to those who confine to the norms of the caste-ridden society. Ibid., pp.9-10.
created new middle class with the ownership of land. But by and large Indian middle classes grew out of the professional and educated classes. Almost there was an unbroken tradition of higher status to the learned. So after the advent of British, the core of the middle classes contained the 'learned'. This lead of the 'learned' was maintained by "India's traditional emphasis on literary education combined with Britain's rule and her imperialist economy to make the intelligentsia the dominant strand in the composition of the Indian middle class." The onward economic development and western education brought different elements into the fold of middle classes. The disparage elements formed the hard core to fight for independence. The origin from heterogenous factors could be stated as

"The land laws introduced by the British were thus responsible for the disruption of the old agrarian structure and the creation of a new social order. The new rent-receiving landlords, money-lenders and businessmen came to form the nucleus of the new middle class that emerged in the country in the nineteenth century. They together with the traditional castes whose occupation was study and teaching or government service, were the first to avail

\[29\]Ibid., p.v.
themselves of the benefits of English education. It was to the educated of this heterogeneous group that the lawyer, the teacher, the civil servant, the merchant and the industrialist of the nineteenth century belonged. They constituted the country's intelligentsia which formed the link between the East and the West, and provided political leadership to the Indians. Their aspirations and desires became the aspirations and desires of India.30.

These heterogeneous elements exhibited a remarkable degree of uniformity of behaviour and mode of thinking. Unlike in eastern countries the mercantile communities were in minority in the composition, limiting themselves to industrial cities31. The dispossessed castes became the proletariat of India.

From this milieu of classes and castes, there arose the problem of nationalism to confront the British. The disgruntled intellectual and businessman started a mighty handshake to overthrow British. With the development of industry, even upper classes took up to business. Thus some Brahmins became the leaders of education and business.

"This occupational mobilization was a great social significance. It tended to effect a radical change in the traditional relationship of the literary and the business classes. The intellectual and plutocrat, who

had in the past pulled in opposite directions, were under the British being drawn close together. Their coming together was also due to political reasons; for while British rule thwarted the aspirations of educated Indians by excluding them from higher posts in the Civil Service, it prejudiced the interest of Indian capitalists by denying them their right to protection. Both sociologically and politically, therefore, the growth of an alliance between the intellectual and the business man was of considerable importance.

The nationalism which developed to the final exit of British from India, nearly drew its core of leaders from this class. Although these were elites from the point of view of the rest of the Indian society, they were, by the exigencies of the political situation, forced to align with the other classes in their fold to achieve the object of wresting freedom from the British. This fact had its great strategic importance for nationalism and consequently for the middle class. While aligning with the rest of the classes or castes as they were manifested in India, they themselves underwent certain types of changes which were from the social system point of view significant as the reform movements of the time show the liberalising trends.

32Ibid., p.357.

in the Hindu social structure to make a concerted attack on the British. In the words of Desai the situation may be summarised:

"Indian nationalism felt democratic yearnings from its birth. The socio-reform and religio-reform movements embodied these yearnings. In varying degrees, these movements sought to eliminate privilege from the social and religious fields, to democratize social and religious institutions of the country, to reform or dissolve such disruptive institutions as caste which were obstacles to national unity. They sought to establish equal rights of all individuals irrespective of caste or sex. The reformers argued that such democratisation of institutions and social relations was vitally necessary to build up a sound national unity to achieve political freedom and social, economic, and cultural advance of the Indian people."

The revolutionary nature of the middle class is vouchsafed by many writers on the topic and there is no wonder why middle class became the leader of nationalist movement quickly and decisively. In industry the collaboration with British under managing agency system is unique in its nature.

34 Ibid., p. 211. Emphasis added.
35 See Griffiths, op. cit., pp. 453-462 for an idea about managing agency system. The system developed as a result of lack of initiative and capital to develop industry in India. The Englishmen were interested in advancing the necessary capital. But they have no interest in staying in India. As a result, Indian companies formed to manage the British capital in India. It served the twin purposes. It helped the initial capital to promote industry. Also it helped Indians to develop business acumen.
Not only that, the Indianization of services also led to the spread of middle class. The lower classes were too much occupied in eking out their livelihood. The upper classes realized that an alliance with the ruling power would only ensure their continuity. Consequently the middle class is left alone to fight for freedom.36

In the situation of colonial domination, the middle classes naturally led the movements for liberation since they have nothing much to lose.

"The middle classes in such territories are men who as yet have very little to lose by a disturbance of the established order and much to gain if they can oust foreign rule and secure the governance of their country for themselves. In general, it is education which has lifted them above their fellows, and education teaches them that the ambition to free oneself, of alien domination is laudable; the rejection of alien rule, they argue, can hardly be right in the history of Europe and America, but wrong in the history of Asia and Africa .... For these motives, partly noble and partly ignoble, it is not surprising that the intellectuals of the middle class have led and are today leading the nationalist movements.37"


37Ibid., p.361.
The character of the middle classes have become more and more complex. Modern capitalism gave rise to political struggles as well as religious struggles. The people in the industrial centres of India considered themselves not as exclusive castes but "as members of specific professions, divided into income hierarchies instead of castes, again an economic concept." The religious aspect too operated side by side but the new economic concept operated in its embryonic stage. By 1921 working class and peasant movements began to take shape to fight for economic betterment. With the rise of urban employment, salaried lower middle classes too joined the milieu. Especially the peasant movements were considered to be the work of lower middle classes. Class-consciousness too developed by the enactment of law, which in its turn developed contractual principles. The hierarchy of courts have been established to enforce those newly-gained rights. The tenancy legislation and incometax controversies directed the way for the development of an economic concept of society.

Gandhi synthesized the conflicting trends.

39 Ibid., pp. 396-397.
40 Ibid., p. 398.
currents and interests into a monolithic movement of masses. He approached the political struggle with a religious appeal. He tried to conciliate the different groups under one single thread to give a massive push to the British.41

Thus with the advent of the British the interpretation of karma theory had changed itself. The caste system was questioned. In place of and side by side with castes, classes grew up, thus changing the concept of society from one of religion to one of economy. In the interaction between Western ideals and Indian goals of life, middle class grew out of the impact, finally to wrest independence from the British. The village economy grew into disuse and in its place rose the organized industry and concomitantly the working class. The traditional castes partially changed into industrial classes. Thus Dharma changed from one epoch to another and absorbed in its field the principles which have been borrowed. The fatalistic theory of karma has undergone a change and became one of optimism and activism, bringing the trend toward materialistic aspect of life.

With the end of the world war II, the European

41Ibid., 399.
powers were economically weakened and in no more a snug position of holding the colonies. The impact of the world war, too, in its turn, spiralled-up the aspirations of nationalist movements in Asia and Africa. In India the development of nationalist aspirations culminated in attaining freedom from the foreign yoke two years after the end of the world war as did the other countries in Asia.

The nationalist movement dedicated itself toward economic development of the country and for the uplift of the down-trodden. No doubt some of these elements have been borrowed from the western outlook. Whatever may be the origin of these aspirations they emphasized an aspect which is to become the key-note of the post-war development in India. That is the economic development of the country.

Although there is a clear-cut goal it was not easy to go or proceed toward that goal. India is an underdeveloped country with teeming millions and vast and unexploited resources. The development of these resources would not be possible without the help of some advanced country and moreover, paramount of all, the newly-won independence of the country could not be guarded without the backing of a strong economic base. And by the time India wrested
independence the world was divided into two blocks and the position of international situation hung in the balance of war and peace. It needed tight-rope walking for India, not to involve in the power-block politics, to help maintain the peace and internally to concentrate on economic development. To annoy anyone is sure to lose a friend or a sympathiser, probably losing economic help. To join one or toeing the line will certainly be inviting the wrath of the other. Moreover the traditional principle of 'live and let live policy' came in the way of joining the blocks. The foreign policy of India is a product of—what the present writer prefers to call—internal and external constraints of a dynamic volatile situation. Internally India has to cater to the needs of its populace through welfare state and economic development and externally to get help from foreign countries to accelerate the pace of economic development. Externally this would have been possible only through non-aligning India to any power block, and internally, planning alone would deliver the goods to the people at large.

Thus when India declared internally welfare state, and planning as a means of attaining it, and externally non-alignment and friendliness towards all, there were mis-apprehensions and doubts expressed about these objectives. A look into the factors which
formulated these objectives would clear the doubts.

The relation of the economic policy to the foreign policy is one of systemic nature. They could not be understood without the one or the other. The systemic nature of these two policies was cogently explained by Prime Minister Nehru when he declared: "Ultimately, foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy, and until India has properly evolved her economic policy, her foreign policy will be rather vague, rather inchoate, and will be grouping." Naturally as the economic policy is intertwined with the foreign policy, the importance could not but be on the development of economic base. The priority given to this aspect of the country would no doubt be an emphasis on the development of the country itself. The accent on economic development will itself put a burden on India to strive for peace in the international situation.


43 Prime Minister Nehru explains further: "To come to grips with the subject, in its economic, political and various other aspects, to try to understand it, is what ultimately matters. Whatever policy you may
The foreign policy of a country does not spring from vacuum but develops by its internal constraints such as its history, peculiarity of the tradition and is consequently always tied to the past decisions. In India the peculiarities of national movement for independence, the religious values and the kind of leadership that directed these movements have a bearing on the formulations of the foreign policy. Prime Minister Nehru succinctly put it; when he stoutly defended the policy of non-alignment:

"... that the policy we were pursuing was not merely neutral or passive or negative but that it was a policy which flowed from our historical as well as our recent past, from our national movement and from the various ideals that we have proclaimed from.

lay down, the art of conducting the foreign affairs of a country lies in finding out what is most advantageous to the country. We may talk about international goodwill and mean what we say. We may talk about peace and freedom and earnestly mean what we say. But in the ultimate analysis, a government functions for the good of the country it governs and no government dare do anything which in the short or long run is manifestly to the disadvantage of that country. Therefore, whether a country is imperialistic or socialist or communist, its Foreign Minister thinks primarily of the interests of that country.... The interest of peace is more important, because if war comes everyone suffers, so that in the long distance view, self-interest may itself demand a policy of cooperation with other nations, goodwill for other nations, as indeed it does demand". Ibid., pp.204-205.

time to time. If the House considers other, different but, nevertheless, comparable countries and situations, it will realize that since India has to guard her newly won independence and solve many problems that have accumulated in the past, it becomes inevitable that she should follow a policy that will help as best it can to maintain world peace and also avoid, as far as possible, entanglements in world conflicts.45"

Although internal constraints such as the tradition and history may have their share in deciding the foreign policy,—a policy which does not take into consideration, the fluid situation of the world, will inevitably fail. This concern for the maintenance of continuity with the past and a concern for the changes in the international situation, peculiarly puts a strain on the foreign policy considerations. Consistent and integrated policies and high sounding principles alone would not solve the entire difficulties. Nehru describes this dilemma of uncertainty in foreign affairs as:

"We are not in charge of the world and the other countries do not necessarily carry out our dictates or follow our wishes. We have to take things as they are and they are, I assure you, in a very difficult state.46"

46 Ibid., p.226.
Unless elements of non-controllability of the situation is taken into account the foreign policy would become sterile and would not relate to the existing conditions. The world is changing rapidly and with it the structure and political thinking of man are also changing. A policy which was good for sometime may not be good in another place and time. So the dynamic situation of the changing world should be grasped. The policy cannot be static, it should change with the changing situations and times.

"Our understanding of problems—ours as well as those of the world—is necessarily influenced by our background which we have to adapt to new conditions as they develop. Having once been part of the nationalist movement, we cannot possibly think of functioning negatively."

Thus the external constraints of unstability of the situation, uncontrollability, division into power blocks, fast changing technologies and communications, and finally the impossibility of considering one's own problems without reference to the world situation necessarily puts a premium on rethinking and to impart a dynamism on the problems of economic development.

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48 Ibid., p. 228.
internally. A policy of peace and non-involvement and non-alignment externally would enable the situation internally to crystallise in a particular direction and the actions could be easily oriented toward this development.

The Indian national movement produced a specific flavour of 'Indianess', thus absorbing the western ideals of material prosperity and Indian (and specifically Hindu) spiritual values. This combination and this absorption has a peculiar relevance to the Hindu tradition of religious toleration. For Hinduism, all religions are the same and all of them are essentially good. The ideals of Hinduism are not the products of monotheism. Hence there is variety and multiple realization of God through several paths. So there is no external regulatory system. This is to say that "that ultimate philosophical and religious values of Hinduism do not require a Hindu state, or any particular kind of state,...". This cardinal principle is the cornerstone of Hinduism. From it flows that India has adopted a secular and welfare state in a natural fashion. The welfare state is, in a sense, a

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state without state religion. It is a natural consequence of the nationalist aspirations and Hindu religious values. Particularly the influence of Gandhi toward this direction is pronounced. This peculiarity is also blended in the middle class who are the leaders of Indian national movement. They are the products of this "blending".

"The stability of India has rested in a large middle class who, adopting from their least conquerors Western political ideals, and bringing to them the permanent strains of Hindu tradition, have occupied the position of power."

It appears natural for India to have adopted 'planning' as one of the foremost principles of economic development. From the milieu of nationalist movement and external situation, and the aspirations of people in terms of Western material goods, the quickest way of realization would not be but through planning. The adoption of planning as a technique of rapid economic development is not a negation of the Indian tradition, as some of the authors have been prone to think. Essentially the concept of changing dharma is a concept of adjustability to the changing environment or to the historical conditions given at a particular period. This aspect of dharma has been amply

demonstrated above. This does not preclude that the fatalism in karma theory has not been there. As a historical product it vacillated from one end to the other as a pendulum, exerting here as a principle of 'action' and lulling into a coma there as a principle of "fatalism". Action and non-action embodied in dharma adjusted it to the given conditions in a given period. Thus when new India opted for planning and concerted, goal-oriented action, it naturally and without any obstruction fitted into the framework of welfare and secular state.

The principles of socialism too fitted into the framework without any convulsions or contradictions with the tradition and new principles. When the caste structure and the theory of re-birth are questioned, still the tradition supplied the necessary acquiesce to accept the new principles of socialism. Tolerance for the novel and changing to the new conditions are all embodied in the tradition. This does not mean that all sections of the population took to the new principles or adopted or are adopting themselves to the new resolve. Most certainly not. What has been emphasized here is that at value level there is no contradiction. This is essentially the specific element of the Indian Social Structure.
This continuous adaptation and change in Indian tradition has been clearly put by an author as:

"...what is the central and unchanging element in the ancient, shining civilization of India that is being projected into new forms today. It does not, I think, consist of religious rites, for these are altering. Nor does it lie in art forms; a modern, yet still Indian, art is now flourishing. Neither is it a specific social structure, for many features of caste and family are disappearing. All these things change. Yet one—or at least I—cannot help feeling that India is still characteristically Indian and not anything else. Perhaps the enduring element, which has animated that civilization for so long, is tolerance, a tolerance of the new, the unusual, and the different, a capacity to reshape itself in changing conditions, a quickness of comprehension and a willingness to seek for new solutions to new problems. Certainly her history from period to period has revealed this kind of flexibility. She can keep the old, if it is useful, because she can also uncomplainingly give up the old, when it is no longer useful. She does not have to experience a violent conversion, get rid of all her past at once, and suddenly become something different. She can instead progress by successive steps, even by steps taken in quick succession, as at present. She can always be adapting herself, without experiencing a devastating feeling of guilt in doing so. Or so, at least, I surmise."  

When the emphasis has been shifted from spiritual to material possessions of the principle of 'artha' became dominant and consequently action which is required for the attainment of this has been accepted.

as one of the conditions for its realization.

What is after all planning? It is a technique for the production of values economic or otherwise. This is nothing but organization of action on goal-oriented lines. Thus when socialistic pattern of society was adopted as the goal of Indian state there was no dislocation in the purushartha except relative diminution and enhancement of emphasis among them. After all the purushartha are pathways of goal-oriented action. The principles of socialism too are goal-oriented pathways. As far as the principles of socialism are concerned all men are equal and present action would lift the man from one stage to the other i.e. in terms of stratum. In Hinduism past actions are responsible for the present and the present actions influence the future. What has been jettisoned from this Hindu principle is that one can better one's life through present actions in one's own lifetime, instead of after life or next life. Thus the socialistic pattern of society too fitted into the tradition without any dislocation of continuity in the tradition. This does not mean the continuity is unending, there are gaps too, i.e. a definite break with the past, for example the goal of Moksha. It has been left to the individual to seek or not to seek. As far as collective action is concerned with material aspect of life, new goals have
been set up.

**Resume:** It has been said that Philosophical principles arose out of the pressure of moral and physical evil in life. To get rid of this evil one should go out of the life-cycle of births and deaths. Hence Moksha is the resolution from birth-and-death cycle. Past actions determine the present and the present actions will have a bearing on the future. So Dharma, artha, Kama and Moksha are ideals of life of man—one should strive in this life. To strive towards these principles one should go through four stages of life, i.e., Brahmacharya, garhasthya, vanaprastha and finally samnyasa. These stages represent coming into being and going out of existence, to get prepared for involvement in the world and getting out of involvement from this mundane life. From these principles of Karma, i.e., bearing of past actions on the present, gave rise to the establishment of the four-fold caste stratification. One should strive to do his/her dharma in the present life. These accounts will be taken into consideration at the time of reckoning and next higher stage is reached. But dharma changes from time to time and place to place. So in the course of time new dharmas are proclaimed and God descends to earth to proclaim new dharmas in place of the old one.
with the changing dharmas new classes and institutions arose due to western impact, such as the middle class and modern industry. The nationalist movement derived its sustenance from the western values as well as the Indian tradition. Finally when India became free, she has opted for socialistic pattern of society and planning and externally for peace and non-alignment from power blocks. Thus a continuity and break in the Indian tradition has been systematised with western ideals.