CHAPTER VII - CHANGES IN VALUE SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS

There has been an indelible impact of foreign institutions and ideologies on the Indian Constitution and political system.

Though the changes referred to in earlier chapters are social changes affecting modernisation, it is easier to understand how in a traditional society like India, the impact of foreign institutions and, therefore, of value systems has been different in different parts of the country. A short historical background on Indian institutions, the role of the individual, family, joint family and state, as understood by Indians themselves, may help to appreciate the rate and direction of changes that are taking place despite the fact that, since earliest times, India has been an open society, which has been influenced by external forces throughout its 5,000 years of history.

Modernisation

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, the term modernisation, with its component of social changes, was used to refer to the growth of nationalism and secularism and to the process by which men and societies broke away from the constraints of tyrannical regimes and constraints of superstition. Because the terms, modernisation or Westernisation, have been used loosely, it is much simpler to speak of changes occurring in individual attitudes, in social behaviour, in economics and in politics. In an effort to provide an empirical basis for defining modern man, Alex Inkles conducted a survey of people in six nations and concluded that there are certain attitudes shared by men in modern societies, irrespective of cultural differences. Among these modern attitudes Inkles lists "a disposition to accept new ideas
and try new methods; a readiness to express opinions; a time sense that makes men more interested in the present and future than in the past; a better sense of punctuality; a greater concern for planning, organisation and efficiency; a tendency to see the world as calculable; a faith in science and technology; and finally, a belief in distributive justice.\(^1\)

**Traditional India**

How does a traditional Indian conform to this definition or description of modern man?

The individual has no say in traditional Hindu society; it is the family which is the most important unit of relationship. In addition, the socialisation that each child receives in the family determines how each child will relate to other individuals throughout his life. In India only the child is individualistic; as he grows up, he loses his individuality and assimilates himself to the collective group - whether this is the family, clan or a work group. Each individual in an Indian family is responsible for others. In fact, brothers are responsible for the marriage and well being of their sisters. The ideal in India is that the family, indeed the kinship group, should not splinter. Authority rests with the father as the head of the family, and after him, the mother and/or the eldest son, who is supposed to guide and fulfil all the familial economic commitments to his brothers and sisters. In discussion of kinship and political power, in addition to the iron clasp of the caste system, neighbours and others respect a person who looks after his kinsman. When education is over, the parent's anxiety shift to getting his son or

\(^1\) INKLES, Alex - The Modernisation of Man.
daughter a job. As in the West, there is no dramatic break from the family, with the son or daughter living separately and in total independence. In India it is a long term gradual shift from dependence upon parents to obligation to parents, to dependance again on their children.

**Socialisation and Social Security**

In India, governmental and economic factors reinforce the cultural norms and perpetuate the socialisation pattern. Clearly one of the reasons why the extended family is so important in India is that the parents by themselves could not possibly supply all the 'goods and services' that children need. Education, employment and social security are not on the state list of governmental responsibilities. They are the responsibility of the family or the extended kinship group, towards the children. This is of significant importance because it is a weakness of the state and Central governments of India that greater power and responsibility lies with the family and caste. This organic relationship between caste - family - socialisation and society is important to understand how superimposed Western models of growth or governments do not usually take deep roots as quickly as one wishes. The voting pattern in contemporary India is a clear example of the role of caste in a parliamentary democracy and how the number game is manipulated.

**Historical Account**

India has a legacy of political development leading up to the first great empire, that of the Mauryas, when for the first time most of the sub-continent was united under a single government (c320 - 185 BC) and produced statecraft associated with Kautilya, the author of
'Arthasastra'. From the Mauryas also came the earliest surviving stone sculptures of India and the most ancient Buddhist stupas. Buddha's father was a tribal chief of a minor republic, which today goes by the name of Panchayat Raj. "In present day politics there have been conscious attempts to revive the past in a new form, and to fit traditional Indian concepts into the framework of 20th century democracy. Able historians like R.K. Mukherjee showed with some justification that certain villages in ancient and medieval India had local semi-democratic ruling bodies, and K.P. Jayaswal, a competent Sanskritist, also proved that ancient India had republics and constitutional monarchies, with popular assemblies and cabinet government. With his ability, like a barrister, he was able to convince educated Indians that constitutional democracy and limited monarchy were well known to their remoter ancestors. Even Indian communists have tried to use this knowledge, but according to Western critics there is not much evidence of India's political legacy, but rather the use of that legacy, otherwise almost forgotten except in academic circles to support political concepts, which are in fact modern imports."

In one respect, however,"the Indian government since independence has consciously tried to revive past political traditions. This is in the establishment of elected village councils, continuing the tradition of the panchayats. These committees of five village elders, generally the most substantial peasants of the community, usually holding office by heredity or appointed by co-option, were most vigorous when the Central government was weak. They declined in influence in British days, but they are now again active, as small demonstrative

2. BASHAM, A L - A Cultural History of India.
The theoretical purpose of the whole social and political structure of classical India was to emphasise dharma and to allow for as many individuals as possible to achieve 'moksha'. The complex social order of Hinduism existed primarily to serve this end, and the state was there to promote the well-being of society. Prior to the state comes the social order, and prior to the social order was the individual, striving in the best way he could for salvation. The ancient Indian seer, unlike the Chinese sage, or the Hebrew prophet, thought not in terms of the salvation of the whole people, an aim which he believed to be impossible in an age of decline, but of the salvation of individual men and women. This fundamental individualism is perhaps the reason why India, unlike most other former colonial countries, has taken so enthusiastically to parliamentary democracy, where ultimate political power is in the hands of an enormous number of individuals, each casting his vote alone and in secret.

As Sir Reginald Coupland said, the Western impact on Indian religion and philosophy was relatively slight, as in that field there was an old-established tradition strong enough to resist any new doctrines.

Democracy is by no means a Western institution; it is a human institution. The past history of India is replete with institutions of democracy. K.P. Jayaswal has dealt at length with the subject in his "Hindu Polity", and has listed 81 republics in ancient India. "Democratic institutions still exist in certain parts of India. Among the Khasis of Assam for instance, it is still the custom to elect the ruling chief by a vote

3. BASEHAM, A L - A Cultural History of India.
of the whole clan; this custom has been handed down from
time immemorial. This principle of democracy was also
applied in India in the government of villages and
towns."^4

Parliamentary Democracy

In 1947 the transfer of power from Britain to India
that took place in this country was basically the change
of hands from one set of elites to another. In Macaulay’s
words, they were “the new Indians, who were Indians by
birth but Western in thought and behaviour”. Associa-
tion with the British educational system had taught
them to admire Milton, Shakespeare, Adam Smith, Laski,
Liberalism and Western political thought. Even persons
like Rajaji who had not left the shores of India were
greatly impressed by those ideals and were a symbol of
the synthesis of tradition and modernity. Gandhi and
Tolstoy had felt and advocated that social and political
progress should be based on moral, and religious powers.
But the Indian National Congress, unheeding Gandhi’s
advice to remain a popular movement and stay away from
power inherited the Raj. The influence of Britain on
Nehru needs no stressing. The country was full of
barristers, doctors and in general leaders who had the
imprint of British life and thought on them. English
language had opened new vistas, through political lite-
rature of the world, and the Constituent Assembly
drafted what is probably the finest written Constitution
in the world, drawing inspiration from the Constitutions
of the USA, the Irish Free State, Switzerland and
Britain.

India, a union of states, is a sovereign democratic
republic with a parliamentary system of government. The

4. BHAVE, Vinoba – Communism and Sarvodaya in Sarvodaya
   May 1957.
Constitution came into force on January 26, 1950. It is federal in structure with unitary features and the President is the constitutional head of the executive of the union. Though the Constitution vests executive power in the President, it also specifies that he shall exercise this power 'in accordance with the Constitution'. Article 74 (1) of the Constitution enjoins that 'there shall be a Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister to aid and advise the President in the exercise of his functions'. The real executive power thus vests in the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister, collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha (House of the People).

Similarly in the states the Governor occupies the position of the Head of the executive of the state, but it is virtually the Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister as the Head, collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly of the state, which carries on the executive government.

A system of local self-government is in vogue. The Directive Principles of the state policy embodied in Article 40 of the Constitution say that the state shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government. A Panchayat Raj system has grown in many states, though participatory functioning by villagers has not been uniformly high. In fact, the political literacy of Tamil Nadu is so high that with conviction one can say that this form of local self-government has shown remarkable political maturity in the state.

How has India, with its Hindu hierarchical society, reacted to the Western concept of democracy? How have
Western ideals of democracy taken root in a society which has to give up its structured social organisation and accept everyone as equal?

Indian society is distinctive because of its distinctive culture. The French anthropologist, Louis Dumont, is largely correct in his characterisation of the basic ideology of Indian society as one of hierarchy to which may be opposed the egalitarian ideology of Western society in the last 200 years or so.

Parliamentary democracy, which originated in the Greek states and has evolved for over 700 years in Britain, has been superimposed on India, and has given the atmosphere and trappings of having taken root, but it has not done so. It has created an atmosphere of action which has become a substitute for action. What had appeared to be a united India under British rule, with English as the official language, a common legal system and excellent executive action under the civil service examinations, and with fissiparous tendencies kept in check - this now began to show stresses and strains when the system came to be worked by Indians themselves.

As has been stated elsewhere, Gandhi created the Congress and fostered it as a national organisation and not merely as a political party, "not simply by virtue of its total claims to speak for a national interest but also by that side of its activities which was designated 'constructive work'. This was an aspect of Swaraj itself, understood not only as political independence but as real self-rule through self-reliance." It covered

5. MORRIS-JONES, W H - The Government and Politics of India.
the non-political part of the campaign for Swadeshi – the
use of home made goods – through encouragement of hand-
spinning and the wearing of Khadi; it extended to social
reform, with movements for prohibition and the uplift
of the untouchables, and it included voluntary social
welfare activity for health, hygiene and education. 'Con-
structive work' served many purposes in the national
struggle. Not only did it attract, occupy and supply a
mission for some of the members for all of the time; it
also proved convenient as a sector of retreat and with-
drawal for most of the members some of the time – when-
ever in fact, a pause was for some reason indicated on
the political front.

Turning one's attention to the Indian historical and
social background which prompted Gandhi to enunciate his
solution to the country's problems, it is necessary to
draw a distinction between social change and modernisa-
tion to evaluate changes in a traditional society. In
traditional India with its multiplicity of religions –
Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism – there
were continuing instances of social changes which did not
imply modernisation. These changes were from one tradi-
tional structure to another without, however, transcend-
ing them for a qualitatively distinctive evolutionary
differentiation.

The idea of one man one vote in a country with such
vast illiteracy posed the biggest problem of organisa-
tion in any policy exercise. Just over 50 per cent of
the voters went to the polls (i.e. 176m) in 1951-52. Not
all of them understood the nature of the exercise. To
ensure that mistakes are not many, even now a voter is
required to rubber stamp his preference in the box dis-
playing the symbol of the candidate of his choice. The
choice has not been between plans or policies, it is
only between the persons concerned. Nevertheless, the imported election system, modified to suit the local illiterates, has taught prospective politicians a pattern of group voting, individuals constituting that group how and to achieve success. Nowadays language, regional, communal and caste considerations have begun to play such a vital part in polls that they become a mockery.

New alignments and defections to form yet another party, are the order of the day and of disgruntled politicians have learnt to whip up mass hysteria and create chaos in the country. In less than three years of independence the situation seemed to get so much out of control that Nehru had to think of a National Integration Council, composed of the Chief Ministers of all the states. Soon after the work of integrating the Princely States, the ugly head of linguistic state reorganisation was raised - almost hindering any national development work.

As a spin off from, or possibly independent of, the organisation of linguistic states, the role of English in India has assumed national political dimensions and even now threatens to divide the country into pro-Hindi North and pro-English South which prefers to retain English as an official language and also as the medium of instruction. The logic that in India the largest number of people in the North speak Hindi (in any case not an Indian language) which should therefore become the national language, does not convince the South. That English has been the largest window on the world is forgotten and politicians have become victims of their own pet theories. Further if English is not retained at higher levels of education, the community of Indian scholars will be in danger of disintegration and
student migration from state to state within the country or from the country to other countries already limited will cease.

Indian politicians in the nationalist movement were not exactly accustomed to looking for issues in the realm of constructive economic policies. No one disagreed with the necessity 'to increase production in order to remove abject poverty'. Everyone knew that it meant alternatives to investment, industrialisation, land reforms and creation of employment opportunities. To achieve these results meant utilising unreservedly the talents of Indian economists from the 50's schooled in developmental economics. Those who had been trained in the West or who were familiar with other growth models, scholars of eminence like K.N. Raj and B.N. Minhas were forced away from offering constructive solutions to the problems by the government in power. The Congress was in power for 30 years and when one examines the development policy pursued, one sees how this has influenced the shape of political alignments. When socialist policies were being debated, it was obvious to Jaya Prakash Narayan, formerly a top socialist leader, that opportunist politics was misplaced, but that all conventional politics was inadequate and improper for India. His socialism became Gandhian "Sarvodaya" (roughly social regeneration by voluntary services instead of state action) and his road that of Bhave's Boodhan.

Though several writers have equated present exchanges in the kingly courts of early India to a form of corruption, parliamentary democracy with its lease of five years of office offers different kinds of temptation. "The economic development in the country has given politicians much to manipulate. They have been active
on the 'spoils' side — in three directions or energy. First, politicians have worked to get for their regions (or less often for their community groups) the benefits of government enterprises — in terms of employment in a state-factory, for instance. Politicians have taken great interest in 'location of industry' problems. Second, they have found themselves useful as intermediaries who were able to influence the operation of governmental controls (e.g. licensing for export-import business) policies on behalf of 'clients and allies, actual or potential. Third, the growth of rural development expenditure in the hands of newly elected local bodies has resulted in politicians having to cultivate faction leaders, who are often vote banks. As government activity expands, so does the job of the politicians. His need and desire to make friends and influence people find new means of expression.6

Impact of Foreign Ideologies

The centrifugal tendency began with the reorganisation of states on linguistic lines. The emergency clamped down by Mrs Gandhi struck the knell of democracy, but it must be said in her favour that it was only because of her that a two-party system has emerged after the March 1977 elections.

Once Nehru said that all our schemes and planning, our ideas of education and of social and political organisations, have at their back the search for unity and harmony. Discussing the future of democracy in A is, the then Speaker of the Lok Sabha observed:

"In a parliamentary democracy unanimity must be aimed at; it may not be practicable. But unanimity must be the goal. My own feeling is each man, whether he is in the opposition or in the government, is as much a representative of his constituency as any other man. So,

in a parliamentary democracy, the party in power should carry the opposition with them as much as possible. When important matters are brought before parliament, the government must consult the opposition also.\textsuperscript{7}

Jayaprakash Narayan is probably right when he refutes the suitability of the Western form of democracy for India. "He rejects that political arithmetic which bases government on an aggregation of individual votes. The people, the nation, the community can never be equated with the sum of individual voters. Parliamentary democracy in the 20th century has an inherent tendency towards centralism. At one extreme of its political spectrum is the national state and at the other the individual voter, with a blank in between. The issue of power in such a state is decided not by the fictitious people, but by a balance between political parties and such organised interests as industrialists and powerful labour unions. The people represents a wholeness while the organised interests are sectional."\textsuperscript{8}

Government by consent is not an adequate enough concept for India. Jayaprakash wants a participating democracy, in which everyone at all levels takes part in decision making and not a 50 per cent democracy. Though India launched Panchayat Raj, as a result of Balwant Rai Mehta's report, Jayaprakash's vision of Indian politics is different. In a country like India where there is an age-old tradition of autocratic rule, Panchayat Raj represents a political revolution greater probably than the transfer of power in 1947.

"Democracy is something deeper than a form of government - voting, election etc. In the ultimate

\textsuperscript{7} TIMMER, Hugh - The Democratic Ideal in Asia.
\textsuperscript{8}
analysis it is a manner of thinking, a manner of action, a manner of behaviour to your neighbour... I do not know whether I am prepared to say that the same type of democratic institution is suited to every country. In the final analysis you come back not to political terms, but to human terms; or if you like, spiritual terms.  

This observation was made in the late fifties by Pandit Nehru and, as events during 1976-77 have proved, India needs a different brand of democracy, probably the one which JP advocates; which also has built into it the need for or claims of social or political order. It is good to aim not at politics and power, but at the politics of humanity. After all, the whole purpose of any civilised economic system and of political system ought to be the creation of a society in which freedom, justice and harmony are blended.

**Impact of Foreign Ideologies**

(i) **Effect of Common Features**

(a) **Parliamentary Democracy**: Though Britain has no written Constitution, the Indian Constitution is eclectic. Its federalism and the Supreme Court remind one of the USA; the nominal status of its Planning Commission of the USSR; the Presidency of the French Republic, and the provisions of local government of the works of Rousseau. The basic provisions, however, are inspired by the Westminster model: bi-cameral legislatures, five-yearly elections subject to the Prime Minister’s right to dissolve Parliament, and guaranteed liberal freedoms. We have a multi-party democracy. Though the recent emergency tried to shake the foundations of the judiciary, the judiciary is independent.

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9. TINKER, Hugh - The Democratic Ideal in Asia.
In their tolerance for free expression, even for racist or anti-democratic parties, Britain and India are close to liberal democratic ideals. Britain is now part of EEC; she identified herself with the Western military alliance and choice of allies, military and economic has been determined not by democracy, but by expediency, fear of communism and adherence to capitalism. On the other hand, the Indian attitude to the USSR was conditioned first by non-alignment, later by links with both the USA and the USSR aimed at security against China and Pakistan.

(b) **Cultural Similarities:** The Civil Service in both countries is dominated by a pluralist elite, normally based socially, but highly competent and therefore complacent and unwilling to change.

(c) **Controlled Separatism:** The examples of Britain's relationship with Scotland and Ireland and Wales internally have encouraged separatist tendencies in India and also chain reactions set up by linguistic states. Even in political ideologies, the Southern DMK party, with its emphasis on Dravidian culture, elected communist governments in Kerala and Bengal which co-exist with the Centre. Differing political ideologies in India have highlighted the centre-state relationship and the centrifugal tendencies as is also evident from the parliamentary debates in the House of Commons in Britain which no longer calls herself Great Britain.

(d) **Economic Ideology:** In India the public and private sectors are eroding Indian feudalism and our brand of socialism is somewhat overrated by politicians. Foreign investors are shy of sinking their capital in Indian enterprises for the fear that politicians, to appease the voter, may nationalise the industries. Foreign companies and shareholders feel hampered by Indian
feudalism and threatened by Indian socialism.

Bureaucracy and the political system are British inputs into contemporary India. In fact, the ideas that filtered through English language brought with them the concepts of individual liberty and state control through the civil service. Rajaji, influenced by Thoreau's essay on 'Civil Disobedience', agreed that the state should interfere as little as possible with the individual liberties of people. He conceded that the principle of individual liberty was a peculiar virtue of British life and civilization, but felt that the right to sell poisons (liquor) does not fall within the category of personal liberty. Indian intellectuals, like him, were all the time facing situations of neo-traditionalism, having to compromise with the imported British value system.

Indians even today have reasons to romanticise the British civil servants. Rajaji in his day was no exception. He admired Sir Thomas Munro and advised all young Indian Civil Service probationers to read the biography of Munro. The only complaint one can level against the Civil Service, after 1947, is that the steel framework is so rigid that it has not changed to meet the requirements of a new nation with aspirations for quicker results. The system has, since its inception, encouraged 'status quoism', whereas a rapid social transformation of the economy requires a dynamic Civil Service. That the service has created a gulf between itself and the society is indisputable.

Many observers of the Indian political system, despite the fact or because of it, see as its primary attraction its sparing the individual that sense of alienation which has characterised atomised European society. The structure of caste creates a secure sense
of social identity, but it has also created chaos in society contradicting all the election promises. Western civilisation is naturally behaving like a dominant character in heredity, concealing the recessive indigenous civilisation.

The weight of present evidence seems to show that while modernising influences are undoubtedly changing many aspects of Indian society and culture, they have not destroyed its basic structure and pattern. They have given Indians new alternatives and some new choices of lifestyle, but the structure is so flexible and rich that many Indians have accepted many modern innovations without loss of their Indianness. They have, in other words, been able to combine choices which affirm some aspects of their cultural tradition with innovative choices.

(ii) Effects and Differences: India and Britain are middle powers, but their status has been changing. India's growing population has had an effect on the total growth and, therefore, on most of the determinants of international power: size of imports, size of exports, diversity and resource capacity to pursue conflicts by force. Despite her slow growth per head of population, India has been continuously emerging as a world power, championing the cause of China to be admitted to the UN. Dean Acheson's remark that "Britain had lost an empire but had not found a role" is not quite accurate. Britain was obsessed with finding a role, with acting as a leader of the Commonwealth or the EEC.

There are limits to possible relations between (1) the super-powers (2) a super-power and a middle power and (3) two middle powers. As one can guess, especially in the last category, the relationship between a rising and a declining power is subject to special strains. As
the rising power's needs and horizons expand, her markets, diplomacy, and defence policy all show evidence of the replacement of powers in decline both by her own growing capacities and by other relatively stronger powers, notably super-powers.

Many in Britain view the ex-colonies with a somewhat possessive paternalism and when India diversifies away from Britain they resent it with hurt hostility. Even if she feels the need for a special relationship with India, both countries cannot indulge in the luxury of nostalgia for the past and must realise that relations between nations depend upon present policy and power structure and not on past loyalties. The speech of the British Prime Minister James Callaghan to Members of the Lok Sabha during January 1976 showed that degree of mature statesmanship.

The Western fear of the spread of communism in the newly independent countries in the post-war period is quite manifest in American foreign policy. For all the oratory from platforms, the new ideology to combat and contain communism which the Americans have evolved is a foreign aid programme. They have built up a worldwide network of the CIA to monitor signals from countries if they show leftist trends. The governments in Chile and elsewhere have been toppled, wars have been encouraged (as in Vietnam), but ostensibly there have been no external influences since independence, nor official documents which could retail this manipulative practice in India. Mrs Gandhi, however, alluded to this "that those opposed to the Congress were getting considerable external help in the shape of money, through propaganda and in other ways". "We have heard that when elections of the Congress party took place in Delhi, representatives of some countries had tried to influence the voting."
The Communist hand in Indian affairs through massive propaganda and through subsidized literature has been extolling the virtue of communism, through publications which are being sold on the pavements of Indian streets, through the sale of smuggled durable goods sold against rupees which are recycled to assist the trade unions and their party activities. Strikes and lock-outs throughout the length and breadth of the country, whether in the public or the private sector, are various manifestations of communist activity which is gathering a momentum on its own, without any active participation either by Moscow or Peking. Now that the Janata Government has removed all constraints, even the CPM have charged the Indian CIA with attempting to steal party files. Since the bureaucracy is staffed by men trained or influenced by countries in the Eastern or Western bloc, communist or capitalist countries, it is difficult to assess the extent of remote control operations like those reported in the press. Foreign aid does, however, to some extent influence the decisions in Delhi which will have chain reactions.

Since India has welcomed foreign cultural missions from all over the world to operate in the country, except the English speaking countries, all others have a major handicap in communication. The French, German, Russian, Hungarian and Bulgarian or Yugoslavian have to put across their message through English if it is printed material or to have English sub-titles if they are visual media. Being confined to urban centres, these activities come under the general scrutiny of the public service and of discriminating readers. All these media, especially films and literature, reach the largest audiences and convey messages of prevalent value systems in their respective countries. The impact they make on the average Indian is qualitatively and quantitatively not measurable. These, therefore, pose a continuing
challenge to the value concept in India and, therefore, to the political system in the country.

India has certainly changed more in the last three decades than in the preceding 300 years. Yet the change is completely inadequate and misdirected. The momentum is partly the result of the operation of worldwide forces, and partly the result of the lag caused by obstructions to self-directed evolution - the pent-up energy, seeking to catch up with the world outside. The pull towards growth in the developed countries is great. People follow this irresistible pull without knowing where it leads to or why they should follow it. Equally seriously, Indian society has been split between those who are mobile and those who cannot move. This separation between the mobile groups and the static masses is perhaps the greatest weakness afflicting India today.

The Gandhi model for growth and ideas were formed at a time when industrial civilisation was still in its infancy. He believed that industrial civilisation could be bypassed. But the task now is to create a post-industrial ethic, though the final task for India is to develop values that will inspire and guide all her people, not just the few who can travel from the pre-industrial to industrial and post-industrial phases of social and cultural development. Gandhi only offered a framework for social emancipation, which is capable of continuous modification. It, therefore, contains many seeds that can grow if properly nurtured, but Gandhi organisations, instead of interpreting this simple person who represented the common man and his ideals, have imprisoned him in Rajghat as a tourist attraction. These organisations have caught hold of the negative and restrictive aspects of Gandhi's ideas. Since India is caught up in a consumer society, these organisations
have naturally obstructed the evolution and ethical thought which is so desperately needed today.

During the last century the British gradually laid the foundations of a modern state by surveying land, settling the revenue, creating a modern bureaucracy, army and police, instituting law courts, codifying the law, developing communications - railways, posts and telegraphs, roads and canals - establishing schools and colleges. Since they also brought the printing press with them, a profound and many sided revolution took place, which changed the social scene of the country.

Even as affluent societies are groping for new alternatives, thoughtful Indians are increasingly beginning to re-discover Gandhi and seeking to interpret him in a modern and futuristic idiom. Compartmentalised discussion of Gandhian ideas, peripherally fitted into the existing polity and economy, have been particularly useful. For Gandhi was a complete man, who developed an integrated world view. He had a systems approach; while others advocated growth, Gandhi was already concerned with the quality of life.

Modern Western and Soviet society which India has sought to imitate suffer variously from exploitative consumerism, world urbanism and gigantism. The government or the state has become more important than society. According to Rabin Clarke's definition of the new technology, it places people before government, men before machines, villages before cities, welfare before growth, small before big, practice before theory, quality before quantity, craftsmanship before expertise and prefers decentralised living to dictatorship. Clarke rejects all contemporary ideologies, including Maoism, as they are all anti-man and pro-system. Against this background the Gandhian framework of development does not separate
politics from economics, economics from ethics, or ends from means. He believed in small decentralised communities and said that the village should not become the appendage of the city. He advocated the concept of production at different levels in a village community and his idea of village swaraj was that it is a complete republic independent of its neighbours for its own vital wants and yet interdependent for many things in which dependence is a necessity. It is from these ideas that the more recent concept of appropriate technology and small scale production have gained currency in E.F. Schumacher's thesis on 'Small is Beautiful'.