PERSPECTIVES ON COLONIALISM IN INDIA
(HIS3C01)

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M.A. HISTORY
(2019 Admission)

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CHAPTER I

MAJOR HISTORIOGRAPHICAL TRENDS

Writing of History in Modern India was initiated by the British colonialists. The British showed keen interest in the study of India’s past and culture. They promoted Historical Studies and research mainly with the political objective of establishing their political domination over India. The company authorities knew that an understanding of indigenous history and culture was essential to rule and dominate India. They found history as an instrument to legitimize the colonial rule. In short, the administrative needs of the British, their desire for domination and justification of the colonial rule led to the origin of modern historiography of India. The Indian historians soon followed the footsteps of the British and made immense contributions in the discovery of India’s past. Historians of all shades have contributed to a better understanding of modern Indian history. A survey of their contributions enable us to distinguish five major trends of historiography. They may be classified as colonial, nationalist, Marxist, elitist and subaltern.

COLONIAL HISTORIOGRAPHY

The colonial historiography of modern India emerged in the second half of the 19th century. It became very popular during the early decades of the 20th century. The colonial historians do not constitute a unified school. They held different approaches and perspectives. The Utilitarians, evangelicals and administrator. Historians are the dominant schools among the colonial historians. The utilitarian school was headed by James mill, who initiated the writings of India history on modern lines. Mill found India as a barbarous country. He believed that the backwardness of the Indian
society could only be changed by implementing utilitarian principles in the field of administration. Evangelical historians like Charles grant and Christian Lassen made their contributions to the development of colonial historiography. They believed that the British rule in India was divinely conceived and preordained to redeem the cursed people to Christianity that tempted the evangelicals to learn the culture of India.

The clear forms and features of imperialist historiography were found in the works of administrator-historians (William hunter, G.B Malleson etc.). They were not professional historians. They tried to describe how the people of a small island subjugated the vast Indian continent. The colonial historiography, however, shared certain common characteristics. It mainly focused upon the benefits of the British rule. The imperialist historians blindly supported and justified the British rule in India. Their basic objective was the permanence and perpetuation of British admiration in India. Naturally, they adopted a non-critical attitude towards the British rule. According to their approach colonialism was not an exploitative system. Colonialism was seen by them simply as foreign rule. British was praised as a dynamic country possessing superior civilization and technology. The colonial historians also praised the western culture and values and glorified the empire builders in India.

The colonial historians adopted a critical approach towards India society and culture. They argued that India had no unity until the British unified the country. They depicted the 18th century India as a ‘dark century’ full of chaos and barbarity until the British came to the rescue. It was the British who showed the path of progress to the ‘stagnant society’ of India. The colonial historiography thus denigrated the Indian people while praising the imperial country. In such accounts, India was depicted as a stagnant society, as a backward
civilization and as culturally inferior. The colonial historians refused to recognize the national movement in India and looked upon it with contempt. They dismissed it as an ‘Indian unrest’. The periodisation of Indian history into Hindu, Muslim and British by James mill became the hallmark of colonial historiography. It laid the foundation of communist interpretation of Indian history. In essence colonial historiography was an ideological efforts of the British to establish their cultural hegemony and to legitimate British rule over India.

The first important history of India came not from the Orientalists but from their great opponent James Mill, an official of the east India company in London. To understand the nature and character of British imperialist historical writing on India. It is necessary to acquaint ourselves with the major assumptions, attitudes and purposes of the writers, and the dominant schools of thought to which they belonged. After the battle of Plassey the major question confronting the merchant-conquerors was the method of governance of the newly won empire. During the first phase of empire-in the pre-mutiny period-three schools of thought competed to control British attitude and policy towards India.

The first of these schools was that men like governor-general warren Hastings and the orientalists like Wilkings, Jones and Colebrooke who formed a high opinion of early Hindu civilization. They thought that changes in Indian life should be brought about slowly and only with difference to the old institutions of the natives. This view came to be maintained later by Elphinstone, Munroe, Malcolm and H.H Wilson. But sympathy for the Indians and their ancient institutions came to be challenged by new ideas and new schools of thought. The eighteenth century was the age of reason, of enlightenment. John Shore, who was governor—general after lord Cornwallis, and Charls Grant, his friend, represented that evangelical view
point expressed in the latter’s observations on the state of society among the Asiatic subjects of great Britan. Grant urged in the observations, the application of Christianity and western education to change what he thought was a ‘hideous state’ of Indian society. Shore and Grant were actively backed by the missionaries who similarly castigated Indian society and suggested similar remedies. To the much advertized Indian depravity and vice, the evangelical and the missionary found ready remedy in scheme of English education proceeded or followed by a general conversion to Christianity. The Utilitarians believed with evangelical zeal in the efficacy of laws and of reform on utilitarian lines to remake whole societies and civilizations. To James Mill, Bentham’s disciple and the leading Utilitarian, Indian culture was static and degraded and the only hope of transforming it lay in an infusion of western ideas and knowledge to be achieved by proper laws administered by a despotic government. This was the ideological basis of Mill’s history.

Mill’s predominant motive in writing the history was his desire to apply the utilitarian doctrine to the governance of India. He classified Indian history into Hindu, Muslim and British period. The radical alteration of Indian society on utilitarian recommended by mill seemed to suit the aims and needs of British imperialism. Mill’s history had its greatest critic in H.H Wilson. Referring to superiority of the Muslims in comparison to the Hindus, so confidently asserted by Mill as a fact, Wilson contended that it was no fact at all. The comparison involved a total disregard of time and circumstances. Because, asks Wilson, the British have left the Hindus behind in the march of progress, would one assert that the Britans in the days of Caesar were more civilized than the Hindus of that period.

Mills’s history was based solely on European evidence, much of which was casual. Elphinstone rightly felt that a
written using native sources might come to different conclusions. The evangelical-utilitarian picture of Indian society and culture presented by Charles Grant’s observations and James Mill’s history gave currency to certain historical clichés which influenced not only European historiography on India but even philosophies of history. But the most important historiography on India was the dominance of the political element.

**COLONEL COLIN MACKENZIE AND THE SURVEYING OF INDIA:**

The study of the surveys and maps which the British made in and of south Asia during the first hundred years of their ascendancy is accordingly a study of the British conceptions of what India should be. European maps accordingly framed the subcontinent in three distinct ways in this early period. Beginning in the early 1500s, general maps showed the traditional region of the indies, from the Indus to Indo China. The subcontinent was, of course, a prominent feature of these maps, but it was not their focus. Later in the sixteenth century, Europeans began to produce maps that framed only the peninsula south of the Krishna, the area of their principal involvement. The third framing developed in the early seventeenth century and focused on the polity of the Mughal empire. These maps emphasized the seat of Mughal power in the northern plains. They also included the Mughal territories west of the Indus: the Punjab, the Hindu kush, and on occasion Afghanistan. They omitted the peninsula. British endeavor to define their empire intellectually. The surveyors and geographers, notably Francis Buchanan and Colin Mackenzie, have now entered the literature as active agents of imperialism rather than as passive data collectors.

The history of the east India company’s mapping activities can be summarized as the history of British attempts
to make detailed topographic and cadastral surveys adhere to a systematic standard within a coherent administrative structure, even as the forces of inertia, expediency, and financial train worked to preserve the almost anarchic condition of map making in India. The practicing of cartography— the making of surveys and the compilation of maps— was quintessentially at once a scientific and a British activity. The geographical narratives used by the officers of the east India company to record their observations of south Asian landscape, their physical forms, and the cultures and societies of their human inhabitants were treated as liberal representations.

Mackenzie began to collect as much information as he could about the Deccan plateau when he was appointed in 1792 to be the engineer and surveyor for the army detachment stationed at Hyderabad. This information included from the “conductors on the great roads”, whose information concerning the distances and directions might not have possessed” geometrical accuracy and was “frequently found obscure and apparently contradictory”, yet by “discriminating and selecting, and reconciling these seeming inconsistencies,’ Mackenzie “obviated these inconveniences and rendered the information of real use. Colin Mackenzie, the most prominent military surveyor in Madras, was given charge of the geographical survey. Mackenzie and his assistants might have constructed exquisite topographic maps of Mysore at scales in the range of one to four inches to the mile, but these were unsuitable for the needs of other officials.

Colin Mackenzie was born in Stornoway on Lewis, Scotland. He arrived in Madras on 2 September 1783. He was thirty and never to return home again. He joined as a cadet in the infantry division but was transferred in 1786 as a cadet of engineers. Hester introduced Mackenzie to some Brahmans to obtain information on Hindu mathematical traditions as part of the biological memoir on John Napier and the history of
logarithms. The biography project appears to have been subsequently dropped but Colin continued to take an interest in antiquities. He was busy with military duties. He began in Coimbatore and Dindigul around 1783 followed by engineering duties in Madras, Nellore and Guntur and during the campaign against Mysore from 1790 to 1792. In 1793 he saw action in the siege of Pondicherry. He was posted as a commanding engineer to Ceylon and returned in 1796. He rose in rank standing from a second lieutenant on 16 May 1783, first lieutenant on March 1789; and captain 16 August 1783. Major by 1 January 1806 rising on to become a colonel on 12 August 1819. In 1799, Mackenzie was part of the British force in the battle of Srirangapatanam, where Tipu Sultan, Maharaja of Mysore was defeated. After the defeat of Tipu, he led the Mysore survey between 1799 and 1810 and one of the aims was to establish the boundaries of the state as well as the territories ceded by the Nizam. Mysore survey consisted of interpreters, a team of draftsmen and illustrators. The collected material on the natural history, geography, architecture, history, customs and folk tales of the region. When he began the survey, he was concerned that he had no linguistic skills and more appalled by the lack of British competence in south Indian languages. Mackenzie survey was not to be ‘mere military or geographical information, but that the enquiries are to be extended to a statistical account of the whole country. Late in 1799, while Colin Mackenzie was organizing the Mysore survey, William Lampton persuaded the Madras council to allow him to start a trigonometrical survey in emulation of the recent geodetic survey linking the royal observatories of Greenwich and Paris. Colin Mackenzie, the first surveyor general of India, actively subverted the court’s intentions for his position and advocated a survey of India.

Colin Mackenzie was appointed surveyor general of Madras presidency in 1810. But these posts were abolished in
1815. Then he returned to continue surveys of eastern India from the Krishna to cape Camorin. On 26 May 1815 he was appointed surveyor general of India with his head quarters at fort William in Calcutta. But he was allowed to stay on in Madras to help reorganize the surveys. In 1817, he worked on planning surveys and examining earlier surveys. He appointed Benjamin Swain Ward to survey Travancore, Lieutenant Peter Eyre Conner for Coorg, Francis Mountford Guntur and James Garling to the Nizam’s territories. Mackenzie documented so many monuments at Mahabalipuram. His drawings and maps from Mahabalipuram provide immediate answers to some of unanswered questions about Mahabalipuram’s monuments. As Mackenzie’s career progressed, he was able to enlist the help of military draftsmen and Indian assistants to gather information.

In 1790, Mackenzie employed Kavali brothers including Kavali Venkada Boriah Brahmin, Kavali Venkata Ramaswami Brahmin and Kavali Venkada Lakshmiah Brahmin as translators. The other group of men Mackenzie employed at Mahabalipuram were draftsmen, copyist, and surveyors. Most of them were the ‘India born’ children of European soldiers, who were educated at the Madras orphans’ asylum. Asylum (established in 1789) put into practice a new system of education by training students to become teachers within the asylum itself. Students who established aptitude for mathematics and drawing were selected by the East India company to become military surveyors. This involved a seven years indenture period that began with training at the Madras observatory school, where they learned surveying techniques before being sent into the field. The asylum and the observatory school provided the Madras survey staff. Draftsmen such as New man and translators such as Boriah and Laksmiah all worked at Mahabalipuram, there is no apparent overlap in their work.
NATIONALIST HISTORIOGRAPHY

Nationalist historiography in India came as a reaction against the distortion of the Indian past by the colonialist historians. So the phrases “nationalist school and nationalist history “can only be understood in the background of the colonial domination and colonial historiography. History in its modern sense was not written in the pre-colonial India. The introduction of English education helped the Indian middle class to learn the value of historical knowledge and to get in touch with the history of India as well as the history of the world outside India. These newly educated Indian middleclass studied the ancient and medieval periods of Indian history from the writing of the colonial historians. The deliberate coloring in these works urged the Indians to have a deep study of their past.

The urge for the study and writing of Indian history among the Indians was supplemented by the emergence of the national consciousness and the social reform movements. The emergence and growth of national consciousness necessitated a nationalist approach in historical writing. The colonial historians had presented dark picture of the pre-colonial India. They in general, stated that the India was never unified politically before the British occupation. The phrase ‘Nationalist Historians’ was first used by R.C Majumdar to denote those historians of India, whose writing had nationalist bias, he qualifies the nationalist historians of India as those’ who are not purely or merely actuated by the scientific spirit to make critical study of an historical problem concerning in India’.

There was conscious effort among the early nationalist historians to show that ancient India was not much behind modern Europe even in scientific achievements .while some of the nationalist historians argued that the caste system was
not there in ancient India, others justified it with division of labor. They argued that the position of women in ancient India was very high and that they also have occupied an honorable position even in the later times. The nationalist react against colonial argument that India never had experienced unity in the past, by stating that there had a ‘fundamental unity’ in this country from the ancient period itself or R.K Mukerjee Wrote a book namely, ’Fundamental Unity of India’ to prove this he upheld the religious and spiritual unity as the fundamental tenets of ancient Indian civilization.

Nationalist historiography likewise sought to explain the easy conquest of India by the British. The interpretation of the colonial historian of the Hindus as two separate Nationalists in India was criticized severely. They argued back that the Hindus and Muslims in the pre-colonial period always behaved towards each other like good brothers and formed one nation it was the British who for the first time imposed real foreign rule upon India.

Modern historians have also been divided between those, such as Tara Chand, who held that the India has been a nation-in the making since the ancient times. At the same time, to their credit all of them accept India’s diversity its multi-lingual multi-religious, multi-ethnic and therefore multi-cultural character. Nationalist historians also have ignored or severely under played inner contradictions of India society based on class and caste or the oppression of and discrimination against women and tribes. They have also ignored the movement against class and caste oppression. Nationalist historiography in India, as elsewhere, was sometimes guilty of methodological lapses, of deviation from the ideal of objectivity which is the narrow of all true history. It is the inevitable result of making history provide service for current issues. From patriotism to chauvinism is but a step. If the imperialist historians were prone to see everything had in
the Indian past, some of their nationalist counter parts betrayed a tendency to see everything good in it. Emotion and sentiment usurped the place of reason, and detachment, balance, perspective, and objectivity- all became a causality according to Romila Thaper, There was an un ashamed glorification of the ancient Indian past. This was in part a reaction to the criticism of mill and other writers and in part a necessary step in the building of national self –respect. The glorious past was also a compensation for the humiliating present.

Nationalist historians could at times be seen asserting or justifying contradictory positions: military power and the values of non-violence; democratic traditions and those of imperial glory; the spiritual superiority of Hinduism and the word lines of the ancient Indians; and the high status of women in the Vedic period and their secluded life and position of inferiority on social economic, religious and moral grounds. A by-product of nationalist historiography but one which had dangerous potentialities was communalism. The weakness of nationalist historiography should not blind us to its positive side. Historical study in India received its greatest impetus from the sentiment of nationalism. Weakness of historical works of an extreme nationalist color were only incidental to the time and the purpose of their composition. A good many historical works of the nationalist category deservedly occupy a high place in the world of scholarship. R.C Dutt’s three-volume civilization in ancient India, while presenting the nationalist case, is admirably free from the extravagant claims of some of the later Indian nationalist historians. Romila Thapar acknowledges that in spite of weakness, nationalist historians played a significant role in the interpretation of ancient Indian history. Because they wrote in conscious opposition to imperialist historiography, the historians were forced to take a fresh look at source.
Romila Thapar further observes that a valuable offshoot of nationalist historiography was growth of interest in regional and local history. This led to the discovery of new source materials in local repositories and to greater archaeological work in the region. Nationalist historiography had earlier expressed itself in revealing the exploitative nature of British rule in India. William Digby’s Prosperous British India had shown the way and Dadabhai Naoroji and Romesh Chandra Dutt did laborious work to show that British economic exploitation ruined India’s trade and industry and reduced its people to starvation. They imported the impoverishment of India to the subordination of its economy to British imperialist economy. The ‘drain theory’ developed by Naoroji blamed India’s poverty to British ‘draining of India’s wealth. Romesh Chandra Dutt’s two volume Economic history of India had a revelatory character in that it asserted that the basic cause of India’s malady should be sought in the agrarian problem. The economic critique of British imperialism as found in Naoroji and Dutt marked the beginning of economic history in India.

Nationalist historiography had unearthed so vast a corpus of information relating to the multifarious facets of Indian life and culture as to suggest a new approach to the study of India’s past.

MARXIST HISTORIOGRAPHY

Marxism is a dominant presence in the field of Indian historiography in the post independence period. according to Marxist historians, though India was impoverished due to colonial exploitation. It became more modernized in the process. Colonial power did create new identities and India was more socially divided. However due to education and bureaucracy, brought by the British, oppressed sections became more aware of their conditions. Colonialism made
feudal elements weak and emerged new industrial working class due to introduction of capitalism. The industrialization and establishment of administrative units created urbanization in colonial societies.

Karl Marx in his work ‘The First Indian war of Independence’, he discussed about the British colonization in Indian economy. His ideas were followed by other Marxist historians. Marx argued that British India was a centre which is used to enhance the economic security of British. He viewed colonization as the basic cause for the famine and destruction of Indian economic system. Indian economy witnessed the domination of machine made cotton over the traditional textiles of India. Through the introduction of Zamindari and Rayatwari systems, the burden of peasant increased day by day. High taxes resulted in the feudal process and colonial economic control spread all over India. During those period, the recognized system of India, people were harassment and cruelty. According to Marx, the British encroachment and colonial exploitation led to the anti-colonial movements in India. Colonialists completely destructed Indian weaving and Khadi they throughout Indian textiles from European economy and introduced new type of ‘thread’. Gradually India forced to import cotton even though India is the cradle of cotton textiles. He opined that, not only the decline of Indian textiles centre but also it affected the total agriculture and small scale industrial units all over India. The entire Indian family system was based on the economic security of khadi and handicraft industry. Marx opined that the decline of such industries leads to a social revolution in India. It was the one and only powerful revolution happened in Asia. "Marx studied deeply on the topic of village communities and economic self sufficiency. Marx believed that the Indian towns and cities played a significant role in Indian economy.

According to Karl Marx colonization had positive as
well as negative impact on Indian society. He termed this idea as constructive and destructive impact respectively in a socialist nation feudalism should be decline, colonialization can gave an end to it. So it can be considered as a constructive impact. The complete shattering of Indian traditional economy is the destructive impact by the colonization in India.

R.P Dutt was an eminent historian followed by Marx. He analyzed the British economic exploitation as the basis of colonization. “R P Dutt’s India Today”, which still remains in some ways the best overall analysis of Indian colonial economy nearly forty years after its first publication, developed some of the insights and stray comments of Marx into a theory of three successive phases of British exploitation of our country. The first mercantilist phase from 1757 to 1813 was marked by direct plunder and the east India company’s monopoly trade, functions through the investment of surplus revenues in the purchase, often a arbitrarily low prices of Indian finished goods for export to England dramatically changed the whole pattern of trade, and the years from 1813 to 1858 saw the classical age of free-trader industrial capitalist exploitation, converting India rapidly into a market for Manchester textiles and a source for raw materials, uprooting her traditional handicrafts-a period when the home land of cotton was incidated with cotton:”from the later half of the nineteenth century onwards, finance-imperialism began to enrich itself in India through same export of capital and a massive chain of British controlled banks exports –imports firms.

Irfan Habib was one among the renowned Marxist historian who conduct detailed study on colonization of Indian history. According to him, colonization created pressure on agrarian economy of India. The revenue measures taken by British was theoretically scaling down the land revenue and made opposite effect on economy. The assessment was on the
basic of what and how much it ought to produce, not on what crop it actually raised. The destruction of Indian trade pattern was the result of colonization. it would seem that we should be looking for a two field effect. First there must have been a considerable decline in Bengal in the kind of urban employment of troops, retainers, craftsmen in traditionally luxury traders, servants, and so on., which was supported by the previous appropriators of the surplus. This is exactly the Bardon of Ghulan Hussain Tabatabar’s complaints in 1781. Secondly in so far as the transfer of wealth took the form of exports of eastern commodities, this resulted in a radical disturbance of the entire trading pattern of India.

Bipan Chandra countering the Marxist understanding of colonial Indian history, and argues that Indian national movement was a popular movement of various class not exclusively controlled by the bourgeois. It was a national movement based on the primary contradiction between the interests of Indian masses and British rule. He accepted the secondary contradictions within Indian society of different classes, castes and religious communities.

A.R Desai’s book, social background of Indian nationalism, has been a very popular book and several editions and reprints of this book have been published its first publication on 1948. It also have been translated into many Indian languages. It is another thorough going account of the colonial period and the rise of nationalism from a Marxiist perspective. Desai traces the growth of the national movement in five phases, each phases based on particular social classes which supported and sustained it. Thus, in the first phase, Indian nationalism had a very narrow social basis’. It was pioneered by the intelligentsia who were the product of the modern system of education. This phase continued till 1885 when the Indian national congress was founded. it heralded a new phase which extended till 1905. The national movement
now represented ‘the interest of the development of the new bourgeois society in India.

The third phase of the national movement covered the period from 1905 to 1918. During this phase ‘the Indian national movement became militant and challenging and acquired a wider social basis by the incision of sections of the lower-middle class’. In the fourth phase, which began from 1918 and continued till the end of the civil disobedience movement in 1934, the social base of the national movement was enormously enlarged. The fifth phase (1934-1939) was characterized by growing disenchantment with the Gandhian ideology within the congress and further rise of the socialists who represented the petty bourgeois elements.

D.D KOSAMBI AND HIS CONTRIBUTIONS:

D.D Kosambi was an Indian mathematician, statistician, historian. Kosambi was also a Marxist historian specializing in ancient India who employed the historical materialist approach in his work. He is particularly known for his classical work “An Introduction to the Study of Indian History” in 1956. He used Marxism as a tool of analysis and not a substitute for thinking. He used sources from archaeology numismatics and epigraphy to develop a comparative method in historical writing drawing linkages from anthropology sociology and mythology.

Through the book “An Introduction to the study of Indian History”, Kosambi revolutionized Indian historiography with his realistic and scientific approach. He understood history in terms of the dynamics of socio-economic formations rather than just a chronological narration of “Episodes “or the feats or a few great mn kings, warriors or saints-James Mill’s “History of British India”, he set out his theory of Indian history evolving out of three civilizations, the Hindu, the Muslim and the British. The first two of these he
Kosambi’s non-dogmatic approach to history is clear when he rejected two key Marxist concept—the Asiatic mode of production and slavery—as inapplicable to ancient Indian society. Although he accepted the concept of feudalism in Indian context, he denied the existence of serfdom. According to him, it would be more rewarding to view the early Indian society in terms of the transition from tribe to caste. He argues that the ‘pre-class society was organized into tribes’. The tribes were small, localized communities and ‘for the tribes men, society as such began and ended with his tribe’. The beginning and development of plough agriculture brought about a radical change in the system of production. This destabilized the tribes and the clans and gave rise to castes as new form of social organization.

D.D Kosambi argued that, contrary to Marx’s own statement and to those of several Marxist, the Indian society did not witness a similar progression of various mode of production as happened in Europe. He said that slave mode of production was not to be found in India. He also rejected Marx’s own schema of the Asiatic mode of production as in applicable to India. He, however, thought that there was the existence of feudalism in India, even though he conceived it differently. He was aware that the medieval Indian society was quite different from that of Europe. One of the important characteristics of European feudalism, i.e., manorial system, demesne farming and serfdom, were not to be found in India. But he explained it as a result of the non-existence of the slave mode of production in the preceding period. He further differentiated between two types of feudalism in India—‘feudalism from above’ and ‘feudalism from below’ and which he regards as the peculiar features of Indian feudalism.”

“feudalism from above means a state where in an emperor ‘or powerful king levied tribute from subordinates who still ruled
in their own right and did what they liked within their own territories”, these subordinate rulers right even be tribal chiefs, and seem in general to have ruled the land by direct administration without the intermediary of a class which was in effect a land owing stratum. Where as in feudalism from below, there was a class of land owners developed within the village between the state and the peasant gradually to wield armed power over the local population. ”taxes were collected by small intermediaries who passed on a fraction to the feudal hierarchy , in contrast to direct collection by royal officials in feudalism from above”.

The Marxist historians have contributed enormously to Indian historiography. In all field of Indian history, whether we divide it by periods or by topics, the Marxist historians have made significant contributions. In several areas, their works have changed the course of historiography. The Marxist historians do not from a monolithic bloc. As we have seen in our discussion of several trends, there are wide divergences of views among the Marxist historians. However, there are certain common elements among them. At the level of methodology, kosambi’s works introduced an interdisciplinary approach to history which encompassed literature, archaeology, linguistics, anthropology, numismatics and statistics. Moreover, the Marxist historiography has made interpretation and explanation more important than narration or description.

SUBALTERN HISTORIOGRAPHY

The subaltern studies is the title given to a series of volumes initially published under the editorship of Ranajith Guha, the prime mover and the ideologue of the project. He edited the first six volumes of the subaltern studies. Right from the beginning the subaltern studies took the position that the entire tradition of Indian historiography before it had elitist
bias. The historians associated with the subaltern studies declared that they would set the position right by writing the history from the point of view of the common people.

The term ‘subaltern’ has a rather long history. It was initially applied to the serfs and peasants in England during the middle ages. Later by 1700, it was used for the subordinate ranks in the military. It, however, gained wide currency in scholarly circles after the works of Antonio Gramsci, an Italian Marxist and communist party leader. Gramsci had adopted the term to refer to the subordinate groups in the society. In his opinion, the history of the subaltern groups is almost always related to that of the ruling groups. The word ‘subaltern’ in the title stands for the meaning as given in the concise oxford dictionary, that is, “of inferior rank”. It will be used in these pages as a name for the general attribute of subordination in south Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way.

First phase: elite v/s subaltern:

The subaltern studies asserted itself as a radically new form of history writing in the context of Indian history. It was initially conceived as a series of three volumes to be edited by its eldest protagonist and the prime mover of the idea, Ranajith Guha. The idea was seemingly informed by Gramscian thought. A group of writers similarly dissatisfied with the convention of Indian historiography joined the collective and contributed essays for the volumes. It, however, also involved historians and other social scientists not formally associated with the subaltern collective. The people’s politics differed from the elite politics in several critical aspects. For one, its roots lay in the traditional organizations of the people such as caste and kinship networks, tribal solidarity, territoriality, etc. Secondly, while elite mobilizations were vertical in nature, people’s mobilizations were horizontal.
Thirdly, whereas the elite mobilization was legalistic and pacific, the subaltern mobilization was relatively violent. Fourthly, the elite mobilization was more cautious and controlled while the subaltern mobilization was more spontaneous.

The subaltern studies soon became the new ’history from below’ which did not try to fuse the people’s history with official nationalism. Subaltern studies was conceived in an atmosphere where Gramsci’s ideas were making significant impact. Perry Anderson and Tom Narin, on the other hand, were developing a favorable critique of Gramsci. Other influences were that of the new social history, written by western Marxist historians such as Henri Lefebvre, Christopher Hill, E.P Thomson, Eugene Genovese and others, who emphasized the necessity for considering people’s point of view. Thus the objective of the subaltern studies was proclaimed to ‘promote a systematic and informed discussion of subaltern themes in the field of south Asia studies and thus help to rectify the elitist bias characteristics of much research and academic work in this particular area.

Shahid Amin’s study of the popular perception of mahatma Gandhi is a revealing example. In his article , ‘Gandhi as Mahatma’, deriving evidences from Gorakhpur district in eastern UP, he shows that the popular perception and actions were completely at variance with the congress leaders’ perception of mahatma. Although the mechanism of spread of the mahatma’s message was ‘rumors’, there was an entire philosophy of economy and politics behind it- the need to become a good human being, to give up drinking, gambling and violence, to take up spinning and to maintain communal harmony. The stories which circulated also emphasized the magical powers of mahatma and his capacity to reward or punish those who obeyed or disobeyed him. On the other hand, the mahatma’s name and his supposed magical powers were
also used to reinforce as well as establish caste hierarchies. To make the debtors pay and to boost the cow protection movement. All these popular interpretations of the mahatma’s message reached their climax during the chauri –chaura incidents in 1922 when his name was invoked to burn the police post, to kill the policemen and to loot the market.

Thus we see that in these and in many other essays in the earlier volumes, an attempt was made to separate the elite and the subaltern domains and to establish the autonomy of subaltern consciousness and action. Although there were some notable exceptions, such as the writings of Partha Chatterjee, this phase was generally characterized by emphasis on subaltern themes and autonomous subaltern consciousness.

Second phase: Discourse Analysis:

Over the years, there began a shift in the approach of the subaltern studies. The influence of the post modernist and post colonialist ideologies become more marked. While the emphasis on the subalterns may be associated with Guha, Pandey, Amin, Hardiman, Henningham, Sarkars and some others, the post colonialist influences were revealed in the works of Partha Chatterjee right from the beginning. His influential book, ‘Nationalist Thought and Colonial World’, applied the post colonial frame work of Edward Said which viewed the colonial power-knowledge as over whelming and irresistible.

Subalternity as a concept was also redefined. Earlier, it stood for the oppressed classes in opposition to the dominant classes both inside and outside. later, it was conceptualized in opposition to colonialism, modernity and enlightenment. Guha prakash has argued that since the Indian subalterns did not leave their own records, the ‘history from below’ approach in imitation of the western model was not possible. Therefore, the subaltern studies had to conceive the subaltern differently.
and write different histories. The second phase of the subaltern studies, therefore, not only moves away from the earlier emphasis on the exploration of the subaltern consciousness, it also questions the very ground of historical works as such, in line with the post nationalist thinking in the west.

Critique:

There has been wide-ranging criticism of the subaltern studies from many quarters. Right from the beginning the project has been critiqued by the Marxist, nationalist and Cambridge school historians, besides those who were not affiliated to any position. In one of them, Javeed Alam criticized subaltern studies for its insistence on an autonomous domain of the subaltern.

Ranajith Das Gupta points out that there is no precise definition of the subaltern domain. Moreover, the subaltern historians have tended to concentrate on moments of conflicts and protest, and in their writing the dialectics of collaboration and acquiescence on the part of the subalterns have by and large been under played. David Ludden, writes that ‘even readers who applauded subaltern studies found two features troubling. First and foremost, the new substance of subalternity emerged only on the underside of a rigid theoretical barrier between “elite” and “subaltern”, which resembles a concrete slab separating upper and lower space in a two–storey building: this hard dichotomy alienated subalternity from social histories that include more than two Storeys or which move among them,.. second, because subaltern politics was confined theoretically to the lower storey, it could not there arena a political structure. This alienated subalternity from political histories of popular movements and alienated subaltern groups from organized, transformative politics.’

Christopher Bayly, in ‘rallying around the subaltern’, questions the projects claim to originally. According to him,
the subaltern historians have not made use of ‘new statistical material and indigenous records’ which could substantiate their claim of writing a new history. Sumit Sarkar, who was earlier associated with the project, later on criticized it for moving towards post colonialism. In his two essays, ‘The Decline of the Subaltern in Subaltern Studies’ and ‘Orientalism Revisited’, he argues that this shift may have been occasioned due to various reasons, but intellectually, there is an ‘attempt to have the best of both worlds: critiquing others for essentialism, teleology and related sins, while claiming a special immunity from doing the same oneself’.

In India the subaltern studies began in the early 1980’s as a critique of the existing historiography which was accused by its initiators for ignoring the voice of the people. The writers associated with the project promised to offer a completely new kind of history in the field of Indian studies. Judging from the reactions from the scholars and students in the early years, it seemed to have fulfilled this promise to some extent. It soon received international recognition. In the early years, encompassing six volumes, edited by Ranajith Guha, the subaltern studies made efforts to explore the consciousness and actions of the oppressed groups in the Indian society. However, there was another trend discernible in some of the essays published in it. This trend was influenced by the increasingly important post modernist and post colonialist writings in the western academic circles. In the later years, this trend came to dominate the works of the western academic circles. In the later years, this trend came to dominate the works of the writers associated with the subaltern studies. This trend was marked by a shift from earlier emphasis on the subaltern themes. Sometimes the skepticism became so extreme that it questioned the need for the writing of history itself.
COMMUNIST APPROACH

Professional nationalist historians and many early nationalists contributed unconsciously to communal historiography. The communists tended to underplay the role of colonialism and put greater emphasis on the adversarial relationship with the other religious community. They were, in general, critical of the actual national movements and its secularism, critical of the actual national movement and its secularism. The Hindu communalists declared it to be pro-Muslim, or indulging in ‘Muslim appeasement’. While the Muslim communalists accused it of being anti-Muslim or at least of being Hindu controlled and therefore of being an instrument of Hindu domination. Hindu and Muslim communists shared a common, basically pro-imperialist political approach. The communists also defined nationalism not in economic terms or as cultural nationalism based on Hindu or Muslim culture. Consequently, they traced modern nationalism to Bankim Chandra or swami Dayanand or Sayed Ahmed khan rather than to early national leaders, such as Dadabhai Naoroji, justice Ranade and Surendra Nath Banerjee. The communist historians and politicians- both Hindus and Muslims- accepted this interpretation of Indian past and filled it with more stereotypes portraying the two antagonistic communities facing each other for centuries.

M.N roy’s political positions around the sixth congress have generally been castigated as ‘ultra –lef’ in communist historiography, completely ignoring the fact that the comintern’s positions were, as much if no more, extreme left. Especially after the tenth plenum which expelled Roy, the inexorable logic of the CI’s formulations was that of ‘permanent revolution’ or the ‘fusion’ of the national and socialist revolution. Ironically, the very formation of a communist party in India was still in the crucible. The CI was sectarian for Roy not because he differed from it in its analysis
of different classes or its understanding of the Indian national movement but because it pursued the extreme positions of a line without the necessary tactical cleverness. Clearly, is criticism of the sixth congress was on the same plane of ‘tactics’ as that of the comrades in Meerut jail and the later day interventions by the three communist parties. from the outset of his political career, the premises of M.N Roy’s supplementary colonial theses (1920) were: (a) the national congress was an organization of the Indian bourgeoisie, and (b) there existed two parallel national movement and the other bourgeoisie reactionary. Roy consistently projected the perspective of ‘permanent Revolution’, or the fusion of the national and socialist revolutions into one. There were, thus two methods, within the same paradigm, which communists could choose to work with if they reduced the anti-imperialist national struggle to a bourgeois – democratic revolution which had to be made and led by the working class and its party, the communist party. The first was the method of providing an alternative movement and leadership wholly separate from the existing congress-led movement. The second was the tactical method of conversion of the existing congress movement.

The different appraisals of the Indian national congress produced the crucial disagreement between Roy and the communists on the question of ‘the party’ at this time. As far as the nature of class-alliance-the ‘united front’ of workers, peasants and petty-bourgeoisie—and the goal of the national revolution to overthrow foreign imperialism and the native bourgeoisie simultaneously were concerned, there was nothing to distinguish Roy from the CI or its communist following in India. From the experiment of forming workers and peasants parties to the experience of the ‘Bolshevik group’ a clearly identifiable pattern of repeated ‘rupture’ between the theory and practice of the communist movement in India emerges. The Marxist-Leninist lessons which the Indian communist
learnt from M.N Roy and the Comintern were centered on: the democratic dictatorship of workers and peasants, two stages of revolution, the Leninist party, an insurrectionary perspective, and agrarian revolution as the heart of the colonial revolution. When the communist, functioning as part of a left bloc, entered the scene, the economic condition of the working class was so dismal that they could jointly fight for small reforms and economic concessions along with constitutional trade-unionists like N.M Joshi. The ‘communist party of India’ consisted by S.V Ghate, the joint secretary of the party when he wrote to Saklat Vala the British communist M.P saying,’ our party , which came into existence a year ago under the most adverse conditions, has not been able to make any headway with its programme.

CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL OF HISTORIOGRAPHY

The Cambridge school of historiography was a school of thought which approached the study of the British empire from the imperialist point of view. It emerged especially at the university of Cambridge in the 1960’s. the Cambridge school is the name given to a group of historians in Cambridge who reinterpreted Indian politics in the age of nationalism. They did not think that there was any fundamental contradiction between imperialism and nationalism. In their opinion, local interests and functional rivalries were prominent features of the history of Indian nationalism.

The Background:

Earlier, the historiographical school had appeared in course of the 1960’s. one favored the Marxist view and other advanced the elite theory of the west. It was out of the latter camp that the Cambridge school appeared in 1973. To understand the tenets of Cambridge requires knowledge of the earlier debates in the 1960s. the debate involved the Cambridge school in due course. Briefly, the debate centered
approximately three questions. First of all, what is the innermost spring of the mechanics of contemporary politics in British India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? Was it economic that drove politics or was it the institutional opportunity offered by English education, political representation and other institutional innovations of the British? The Marxist inclined towards the first answer, the elite theorists preferred the second answer. The second question concerns the mainly decisive territorial unit in which political change in the subcontinents was to be studied. Was it the nation as a whole, or was it the region? The Marxists analyzed the problem against the national canvas, but the elite theorists claimed that the region was the true focus of political change in British India. Thirdly, the debates differed in relation to the nature of the social groups on which they should focus. Should they focus upon class and class disagreement, or upon the English educated elite and the disagreement flanked by several castes and societies competing for the rewards of English education and political representation predictably, the Marxist historians looked at class, and the elite theorist concentrated on class, society and the western educated elite. Since the Cambridge school appeared out of the elite theory and branched off from it, the interpretation offered by the elite theorists is relevant in this context. Historians from a number of western universities, especially from Canberra, Sussex and Cambridge, offered this interpretation in reaction to Marxist historiography in India and the Soviet union.

Three influential works emphasizing the role of the English educated elites in Indian politics came out in quick succession: D.A. Low, in his Soundings in Contemporary South Asian History, J.H. Broom Field, in his Elite Disagreement in a Plural Society, Twentieth Century in Bengal and Anil Seal’s The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the later nineteenth century’ are major
contributions. These works focused response or point against Marxist. The main motive behind modern politics were the not economic change but institutional change of British.

The Emergence of the Cambridge:

During the years after independence an attempt was made to place the dynamics of Indian nationalism within the frame work of traditional India. Advocates of this school denied that any fundamental change had occurred in the structure of the Indian economy under the British rule provided opportunities for upward social mobility. This phenomenon had resulted in the politicization of the existing social rivalries expressed in terms of region, religion, language and caste. It is argued that the traditional caste group competed among themselves to obtain new opportunities under the new colonial rule.

Anil Seal, whose thesis at Cambridge was supervised by John Gallagher and which was subsequently published under the title ‘Emergence of Indian Nationalism’, subscribed to these views in his thesis. So did the first generation of Anil Seal’s Students, especially Judith Brown, the Author of ‘Gandhi’s Rise to Power’. In their view, the English educated nationalist Elite were originally the high caste minority of Bengal, Bombay and madras, and the politics of the backward castes and regions was also a minority’s protest against this English educated nationalism. Subsequently, though, John Gallagher, Anil Seal and yet another batch of their students radically customized their stand and the Cambridge school was the product of the customized stand point. John Gallagher, jointly with Ronald Robinson, had earlier written a book entitled Africa and the Victorians, which had made a critical impact on imperial studies in the early 1960’s, briefly Gallagher and Robinson had argued that imperialism was not the product of the new economic force in Europe, but was
influenced by the political collapse caused by indigenous procedures in Africa and Asia. Imperialism was compelled to move into the political vacuum created by the internal conflicts in native societies. Anil Seal, as a brilliant young pupil of Gallaghar, had also dwelt on the political rivalries within Indian society in his explanation of the emergence of contemporary politics in India, focusing especially upon caste and the competition for English education in the middle of several regions, societies and castes. In the early 1970’s a new batch of research students gathered approximately John Gallaghar, Anil Seal and Gordon Johnson. This was the Cambridge school, and it distinguished itself from the earlier elites theory version by formulating new answers to the questions posed in the ongoing debate. Though, they still subscribed to the view that nationalism was basically a play for power. In the new version, the dynamic factor behind contemporary politics was no longer English education and its opportunities, nor of course any broad economic change under colonial rule. It created space for national politics in the country. Secondly the locality was now projected as the real base of politics instead of the region or the nation. The real interests involved in politics were local interests, not a mythical national interest of the region or the national interest of the whole country.

Thirdly, the operating units in politics was recognized not as caste or society, not to speak of class, but as the faction based on the patron-client linkage in the locality. The patron-client network was a pragmatic alliance cutting crossways classes, castes and societies.

The exponents of this new approach are Anil Seal and John Broom Field. In 1960’s Anil Seal published the ‘Emergence of Indian Nationalism’. In the same year John Broomfiled Published ‘Elite Conflict in Plural Society: Twentieth Century Bengal’. These authors explain the
phenomenon of Indian nationalism in terms of the aspirations of caste elites. The politicized caste elites are generally called Bhadralok. In Bengal the three high caste groups of Brahmins, vaidyas and kayastas formed the Bhadralok. Broomfield adds a subcategory of lower class Bhadraloks’. In maharastra the competition between the shetia class (bava, parsi, khoja and bohar communities) and the chitpavan Brahmins was pointed out as clash of caste elites. In south Indian politics the non-Brahmin movements brought the lower castes to the time light of upper class politics.

The Major Works of the Cambridge School:

The origins of the Cambridge school may be traced back to Robinson and Gallghar’s Africa and the Victorians and Seal’s Emergence of Indian Nationalism in the 1960, but the Cambridge school Announced itself only in the 1970, with locality, province and nation. The tender of the Cambridge school were set forth in a number of works, in the middle of which may be mentioned John Gallaghar, Gordon Johnson and Anil Seal: Gordon Johnson’s Work “Provincial Politics and Indian Nationalism: Bombay and the Indian National Congress 1890 to 1905; C A Baily’s work “The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad 1880-1920. And D.A Wash brook’s work ‘The Emergence of Provincial Politics: Madras Presidency 1870-1920, and C.J Baker’ work ‘The Politics of South India 1920-1937. The first and the last were collections of essays by members of the Cambridge school, the rest were Cambridge and oxford thesis supervised by Anil Seal and John Gallaghar. Mushiral Hasan’s Nationalism and Communal Politics in India 1916-1928 and R.K Ray’s Social Disagreement and Political Unrest in Bengal 1875-1927, did not share the emphasis on power play, but on the contrary dwelt on ideological and economic factors.
The historians from this school derived their inspiration from the Cambridge university, especially its most articulate advocates Lewis Namier. Namier’s study of mid-eighteenth century England in which he tried to point out that the rhetoric of ideology was a device to cover up factional politics. This model was applied to Indian politics the result of which was the depiction of all agitations and movements as high drama to cover up a relentless pursuit of self interest by the leaders. It was stated that the impulse for revitalization of Indian politics came from the successive does of constitutional reforms. The main features are they focused upon search of power by individuals and factions. They pushed enquiry’s down from the nation and region to the locality. In locality, their attention was focus on connection between these social categories and finally they also studied how those local connection bounded to the national politics. Over all nationalism was disguised collaboration with imperialism.

The End of Cambridge School:

John Gallagher died in 1980. In memory the Cambridge group brought out a collection of essays: Christopher Baker, Gordon Johnson and Anil Seal wrote, ‘Power, profit and Politics: Essays on Imperialism, Nationalism and change Twentieth Century Politics’. In the middle of other essays it incorporated a joint article by Ayesha Jalal and Anil Seal entitled ‘Alteration to Partition: Muslim Politics Between Wars’, which stimulated rethinking in relation to the partition, and later led to a path breaking book by Ayesha Jalal Entitled the ‘Sole Spokesman’ Jinnah wrote ‘The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan’ wherein she showed that a confederation with Muslim consent had a very real possibility and alternative to partition. But power, profit and politics was the last communal statement of the Cambridge school. After that the group ceased to exist and the individual authors went their individual methods. Another communal,
subaltern studies, claimed public attention in 1982. It was critical of the Cambridge school. But in some complements there was a parallel. The subalternists too denied the importance of class division in politics, and they gave primacy to power dealing rather than class dealings. From the angle of power, they set separately the elite from the subalterns, and accused the nationalist elite of collaboration with imperialism. They went too, went back to the locality in their search for the roots of subaltern politics. There was an echo of Cambridge here. All in all the Cambridge school left a visible trail in Indian historiography.

They says Indian nation politics was not a product of the struggle of Indian people against colonial exploitation. But between Indians for getting benefits given to them by British rulers. The leaders of the national movement were not inspired by great ideals but they where after power and material benefits. They were criticized for taking mind out of the human behavior and reducing nationalism to ‘animal politics’. They did not take attention of mind of human people.

Reading list:

- David Ludden, ed., Reading Subaltern Studies, Permanent Black, Delhi, 2001.
• Matthew H. Edney, Mapping an Empire, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, 1999.

• Nicholas B. Dirks, Caste of Mind, Permanent Black, New Delhi, 2001.


CHAPTER II
EMERGENCE AND CONSOLIDATION OF COLONIALISM

Colonialism is as modern a historical phenomenon as industrial capitalism. It describes the distinct stage in the modern historical development of the colony that intervenes between the traditional economy and the modern capitalist economy. It is a well structured whole, a distinct social formation in which the basic control of the economy and society is in the hands of a foreign capitalist class. The form of the colonial structure varies with the changing conditions of the historical development of capitalism as a worldwide system. Colonialism is the internal disarticulation and external integration of the rural economy and the realization of the extended reproduction of capital not in the colony but in the imperialist metropolis. One basic feature of colonialism is that under it the colony is integrated into the world capitalist system in a subordinate position. Colonialism is characterized by unequal exchange. The exploitative international division of labor meant that the metropolis produced goods of high value with high technology and colonies produced goods of low value and productivity with low technology. The colony produced raw materials while the metropolis produced manufactured goods. The pattern of railway development in India in the second half of the 19th century was in keeping with the interests of British industry.

Colonialism is best been as a totality or a unified structure. all the changes and the newly formed institutions and structures from a network, mutually interconnected and reinforcing each other, which sub serve and being the colonial structure. The first basic feature is the complete but complex
integration and enmeshing of the colony with the world capitalist system in a subordinate or subservient position. Subordination means that the fundamental aspects of the colony’s economy and society are not determined by its own needs or the needs and interests of its dominant social classes but by the needs and interests of the metropolitan economy and its capitalist class.

The second feature of colonialism is encompasses by the twin notions of unequal exchange and internal disarticulation of the colonial economy and the articulation of its different disarticulated parts, through the world market and imperialist hegemony, with the metropolitan economy. Marx and Engels and early Indian nationalists brought out the same features by pointing to several aspects. A specifically colonial structure of production where by the colony specialized in the production of raw materials and the metropolis in manufactured goods; the role of railways as sub serving the interests not of Indian industry and trade but the needs of British production; a particular international division of labor brought about by colonialism, by which the metropolis produced high–technology, high–productivity, high-wage goods while the colony produced low-technology, low-productivity, low-wage goods. They also criticized the fact that iron and steel and other capital goods industries were confined to the metropolis.

The third feature of colonialism is the drain of wealth or unilateral transfer of social surplus to the metropolis through unrequired exports. This aspect was the heart of the early Indian nationalists’ critique of colonialism and their explanation of the economic underdevelopment and poverty of India. Marx’s ‘Rethinking on the role of colonialism in India’ was also strongly influenced by this aspect.

The fourth basic feature of colonialism is foreign
political domination or the existence and role of the colonial state which plays a crucial role in the colonial structure. While this feature was recognized by most of the nineteenth century Indian nationalists, only after bitter political experience, and was given full place in their analysis by the Marxists, the fuller historical role of the colonial state still awaits analysis. The colonial state is integral to the structuring and functioning of the colonial economy and society. It is the mechanism by which the metropolitan capitalist class controls and exploits the colony. The colonial state serves the long term interests of the capitalist class of the mother country as a whole, not of any of its parts. Under colonialism all the indigenous classes of the colony suffer domination. No class is a junior partner of colonialism. The role of the colonial state was greater than the capitalist one. The state itself was a major channel of surplus appropriation. The metropolitan ruling class used the colonial state to control colonial society.

This is an explicit and direct link between the colonial structure and the colonial state. Thus it is easy to politicize the struggle against colonialism. As the mechanism of colonial control lies on the surface, it is easy to expose the links with the industrial bourgeoisie of the home country. The state is visibly controlled from a broad and the isolation of the colonial people from policy and decision making is evident. The colonial state relied on the whole on domination and coercion rather than leadership and consent. Colonial India was the part of the Indian subcontinent which was under the jurisdiction of European colonial powers, during the age of discovery. When Britain assumed the sovereignty of India, the supreme power, the imperial colonial relationship had to be established through or explanation of British rule over India providing the local India rules as incompetent or backward in order to curb their legal authority. The political authority of colonial state upon may instrument for preserving and enforcing its power which
was a prerequisite for the formulation of the colonial policy.

The British consolidated their colonial regime in India according to their ideas of what a colonial state could be and modern state with some modern characteristics emerged. As in modern state, the colonial government had a monopoly of force, a centralized administration for tax collection, a centralized legal system, a professional staff of administrators and bureaucrats, and clearly defined territorial boundaries. British colonial administrators aimed for a rule based on law, administered according to regulations. At the lowest level however, where policy implementation took place, the ties of caste, clan and kinship and patron-client relations played a major role in how the colonial state affected local society.

**Nature of colonial state:**

The colonial state is a basic part of the colonial structure. At the same time, the subordination of the colony to the metropolis and other features of the colonial structure evolve and are enforced through the colonial state. The parameters of the colonial structure are constructed through, and determined and maintained by, the colonial state. The colonial state, thus, does not represent any of the indigenous social classes of the colony. It subordinates all of them to the metropolitan capitalist class. It dominates all of them. None of the indigenous upper classes share state power. In the colony, none of them are a part of the ruling class. They are not even its subordinated or junior partners. The metropolitan ruling class may share the social surplus in the colony with the indigenous upper classes, but it does not share power with them. Not even princes, regents, land lords and compradors have a share in colonial state power. The colonial state differs in this respect from the most authoritarian oppressive, is an organic part of the indigenous society; it is not an instrument for the enforcement of subordination of the society to a foreign...
society or ruling class, or for the export of social surplus. Lastly, it is to be noted that the colonial state is basically a bourgeois state. Consequently, in several of its stages it does introduce bourgeois law and legal institutions as also bourgeois property relations, the rule of law and bureaucratic administration. It can, therefore, as the case with the metropolitan bourgeois state, be authoritarian or even fascistic as in many of the colonies in Africa and south east Asia or it can be semi-authoritarian and semi—democratic as in India.

According to Bipan Chandra, it was bourgeois state, whose policies were only to please the capitalist class of metropolitan country. Bhagawan josh in his work ‘struggle for hegemony in India’ by applying Gramcian concept of hegemony, defined colonial state as a hegemonic in nature. But scholars like Ranajith Guha, challenged this approach. He considers the nature of colonial state as Non-Hegimonic, despotic and autocratic. Partha chatterjee in his work ‘ nation and its fragments’,examined the psyche of nineteenth century western educated elite. Bipan Chandra is one of the Indian historian who tried to analyze colonialism and to institutions. In adopted the Gramcian concept of ‘Hegimomy’ to study the nature of colonial state. He argued that in India, British succeeded in creating a hegemony on the basis of his ideological notions. To Bipan chandra argues colonial state is basically a bourgeois state. Consequently in several stages it does introduce bourgeois property relations. Quite different from all others, Driks, characterized colonial stat in India as ethnographic state, in which caste took as the primary object of social classification and understanding. The British consolidated their colonial regime in India according to their ideas of what a colonial state could be and a modern state with some modern characteristics emerged. As in a modern state, the colonial government had a monopoly of force, a centralized administrative for tax legal system etc. after independence in
1947, the new nation built its government on institutions inherited from the colonial, with all of their strength and their weakness.

GLOBAL FACTORS LEADING TO COLONIALISM

The Indian empire, as it was late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, was for the British unprecedented in its extent and character. As the British contemplated India, an enduring tension between two ideals, one of similarity and the other of difference, which in turn shaped differing strategies of governance for the raj. At no time was the British vision of India ever informed by a single coherent set of ideas. Throughout the raj, and especially during the years of uncontested British supremacy from 1858 to 1918, the ideas that most powerfully informed British conceptions of India and its people were those of India’s ‘difference’. Despite an enduring commitment to the production of knowledge about India, the British made little effort at any time explicitly to construct an ordering system of ideology for their imperial enterprise.

As they extended their rule across the face of India during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the British had to confront the problem of how to govern this far-flung dependency, and, more importantly, how to justify this governance to themselves. The intellectual foundations upon which, during the eighteenth century, the British constructed their rule in India. The British drew upon a range of ideas that had for a long time shaped their views of themselves and, more generally, of the world outside their island home. During the early eighteenth century, united into a single state, the peoples of great Britan began to construct a view of themselves as an integral nation, joining English, Scots, and welsh into one community set apart, as ‘British’, from others. In the mid eighteenth century this sense of imperial patriotism found
expression pre-eminent in a populist politics. As the British defined their own identity as a nation in opposition to the world outside, so too, more generally, did they as Europeans, under the influence of the ideals of the enlightenment, announce their own pre-eminence as a ‘modern’ and ‘civilized’ people.

As they began to put together their raj in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the British had to devise a vision at once of India’s past and of its future. Without such a vision there was no way they could justify their rule to themselves, much less shape a coherent administrative system. It examines the tension between the notion of India as a society stamped by despotism, and that which saw it as an ancient land with its own enduring laws and customs. Among the central categories the British employed as they sought to comprehend India was the notion of ‘oriental despotism’. From the time of Aristotle ‘despotism’ had existed as a description of a style of governance in which legitimate royal power was nearly the same as that of a master over a slave. Although ‘despotism’ faded from European concerns after 1789, with the ending of French absolutism, the notion of ‘oriental despotism’ had enduring implications for the emerging raj in India, for it carried with it the computation that Asian countries had no laws or property, and hence its peoples no rights.

From Alexander Dow’s time onwards, to write the history of India, the concept of ‘despotism’ took on fresh life. It was now a way of contrasting India’s earlier history with the law and order that the British conceived they were bringing. Henceforward, ‘despotism’ was in India thing of the past, but at the same time the ‘idea’ of despotism had to inform the whole of that past. The tropical climate of India powerfully reinforced European ideas of it as a land fitted for ‘despotism’. Dow laid out in careful detail the ways Islam encouraged the growth of despotism.
A view of Indian society derived from the study of texts and cooperation with pundits inevitably encouraged the British to view Brahmins as the predominant group in Indian society, and to adopt their perspectives on it. To justify his reliance on Brahmin collaborators, Halhed insisted that the people paid his eleven pundits a ‘degree of personal respects little short of idolatry in return for the advantages supposed to be derived from their studies’. The discovery of ancient Indian legal texts, inevitably undercut the notion that India was a land subject to an ‘Orienta’ despotism. By Jone’s time, though the British steeped themselves in the classics of Greece and Rome, they took pride in the Europe of their own time as ‘modern’ and progressive’. Asia alone was a land where all greatness was to be found in antiquity.

In the last decades of the eighteenth century, then, shaped by notions of ‘oriental despotism’, together with belief in an India once ‘magnificent’ but now fallen, the British began to put together what was to be an enduring vision of this land. The British attempt to reach some understanding of the nature of Indian society and religion was inseparable from the parallel effort, during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, to devise an ideology that would sustain their rule, initially over Bengal and subsequently over the entire Indian subcontinent. This process involved several elements. The British had, first of all, to decide how far, and in what ways, the east India company should be involved in governance as well as or in place of, trade. They had to set in place principles that would enable them to justify to themselves their rule over India. And they had further to establish enduring structures to order that governance. By the end of lord Cornwallis’s years as governor general, the British had put together a fundamental set of governing principles. To legitimate the conquest of India it was necessary, so Burke argued, not only to discipline Britan’s agents in that country, but to reorder their activities.
the notion of despotism as an appropriate mode of governance for India did not wholly disappear with the Cornwallis reforms. A government committed to a sympathetic understanding of India and its people required more intimate knowledge of the country than was the case under the more distant Cornwallis regime. Hence the years after 1800 saw the first of many detailed surveys that were to define the subsequent British comprehension of India’s land’s and peoples. Pre-eminent among them were those of Franscis Buchanan, who surveyed Mysore and then eastern India for the east India company, and Colin Mackenzie, cartographer and indefatigable traveler throughout southern India who became India’s first survey or general. The work of both men testifies to the relentless quest of the colonial state for detailed information, above all that which could be collected in lists or reported in numerical fashion. By 1820 the raj was already based far more on direct observation and measurement in the Indian countryside than on the citation of Sanskrit text.

By 1820 much that was to endure in the framework of the raj had set firmly in place. The British had convinced themselves of the righteousness of their conquest of India, and after the agonies of the Hastings trial, of their own moral superiority over Indian subjects. This assured sence of superiority further informed the adoption by the government of institutions and values above all those of law and property. together these were to provide a bed-rock for the years that were to follow. The years from 1780 to 1820 also fore shadowed tensions between competing visions of the raj. Some portion of the tension is revealed perhaps in the contrast between Cornwallis’s elevation of the district judge and Munro’s preference for the district collector. For the one the rule of law, though built on English ideas, was presumed to embody universal principles of justice, and assumed as well that men everywhere would, unless checked, abuse power to
their own advantage.

Colonialism is defined as control by one power over a dependent area or people it occurs when one nation subjugates another conquering its population and exploiting it often while forcing its own language and cultural values upon its people. By 1914 a large majority of the world’s nations had been colonized by Europeans at some points. The concept of colonialism is closely linked to that of imperialism. Which is the policy or others of using power and influence to control another nation or people that underlies colonialism. Colonialism, as said earlier, denotes a system in which a country conquer and rules over other regions. It involves exploiting the resources of the conquered country for the benefit of the conqueror. Colonialism’s impact include environmental degradation, the spread of disease, economic instability, and human rights violations—issues that can long outlast one group’s colonial rule. Colonialism implies domination of people’s life and culture. The main goal of colonialism is extraction of economic benefits from the colony. Colonialism results in control over life of natives in political, economic, cultural and social spheres. It is more subtle whereas imperialism is more formal and aggressive.

Major factors leading to colonialism:

- Discovery of new lands and trade routes
- Economic consolidation: the countries like England, France, Spain and Portugal established their colonies primarily for the economic benefits.
- Mercantilism: the policy of mercantilism was based on the premise that the economic development of the mother country (metropolis) was most important and the colonies should be governed in such a way that they lend to the benefit of the mother country.
European rivalry: the exploration was started by Spain and Portugal. Gradually other countries like France and England also entered the race.

To spread Christianity: during the age of discovery the Catholic church started a major effort to spread Christianity in the new world by converting indigenous peoples. As such the establishment of Christian missions went simultaneously with the colonizing efforts of European power such as Spain, France, and Portugal.

Impact of colonialism:

- Slave trade
- Columbian exchange: the term Columbian exchange refers to the wide spread exchange of plants, animal, culture, population, technology and ideas that occurred between the new world (America) and the old world (Eurasia) and 16th centuries as a result of European colonization and trade.
- Boost to mercantilism: mercantilism in a way was both the cause as well as the effect of colonialism.

**ADVENT OF THE EUROPEAN TRADING COMPANIES IN INDIA**

The evolution of nation states in Europe broke the European ‘unified single economic system’. This considered with the agricultural and industrial revolutions in Europe. Mercantilism also played its own role. All these factors created the need to look for new markets. There was strong urge on the part of other European merchants to break their monopoly, and hence the search for alternative routes to the east. This was possible because of great advance in ship building and navigational technologies. It ultimately resulted in the discovery of a new route to the east via the cape of good hope. This led to the European monopoly over the seas—first by the
Portuguese and later by other European powers (the English, Dutch and French). In the late 18th century, India had become the theatre of conflict among European trading companies. Besides the Portuguese, Dutch, English and French, there were other European nations also who were interested in the eastern trade. But their trading activities were on a much smaller scale. With the advent of the European powers, the first to reach were the Portuguese and they were followed by the Dutch, the Danes, the English and the French. They presented problems because they could expect no single authority to deal with and no order in the land as to permit them to carry on their trade in peaceful atmosphere. The British adopted various means and strategies in getting favors and privileges from the native powers which resulted in the establishment of several European settlements. Because of favorable factors like cheap labor, enormous availability of commodities and their demand in the international market, the Europeans found themselves actively engaged in an effective trade. This trend led to the extension of British power over other European countries. The design of British extension of power confronted with other local powers. They consolidated their power applying the techniques of wars, alliances and diplomacy.

The Portuguese:

From time immemorial India had commercial relations with countries of the west. The commercial route then was not direct by sea. The merchants sailed over the Indian ocean and the red sea and reached Europe through Arabia. But in the seventh century when Arabia became very strong as a power it dominated the red sea and the Indian ocean. The commerce of India and her neighboring countries in the south–east was dominated by the Arab merchants from whom the merchants of Venice, Genoa and other Italian cities purchased the Indian goods, mainly spices and re-sold these to different European
countries. When Vasco-Da-gama, a Portuguese mariner disembarked at the Indian port of Calicut in 1498, a new era began in the relations between Asia and Europe. The Portuguese began to take part in the political intrigues among the neighboring Indian states and even entered into alliance with the enemies of the zamorin, the chief of whom was the ruler of cochin. The Portuguese were also engaged in practical raids on the merchant ships of other traders. Alvarez was followed by Vasco da Gama for a second time (1502) and he set up factories in cochin and cananore. In 1510 Albuquerque by a sudden attack occupied the part of Goa from the Bijapur sultan and arranged for its defense by strengthening its forts. He made Goa the centre of the Portuguese power as also of commerce in India.

Under Albuquerque’s successors the Portuguese occupied Diu, Daman, Salsette, Bassein, Chaul and Bombay, San Thome near madras and Hughly in Bengal. Portuguese occupation of Diu gave them control of the mouth of the bay of Cambay which compelled the Arabs to withdraw from their Indian trade. Discovery of brazil gave them an alternative for setting up colonies there. The result was gradual extinction of the Portuguese trade in India.

The Dutch:

The discovery of the direct sea route to India and Vasco da Gama’s reaching Calicut in India encouraged the Dutch to set up a number of small commercial organizations for trade with India and the east. The news of the formation of the English east India company in 1600 encouraged the Dutch to combine their small commercial organization into the united east India company in 1602. The Dutch government granted this company not only charter to carry on trade in the east, but also to enter into war and peace, maintain troops, construct forts etc. in 1641 they occupied Malacca and by 1658
conquered all the Portuguese trading centers in Ceylon. Commercial interests drew the Dutch also in India and gradually they established their factories on the coromandel coasts, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Their important commercial centers in India were Pulicat, surat, Nagapattinam, cochin, Chinsurah, Cossimbazar, Ratnagore, Patna and Belasore. The main feature of the Dutch trade in India and south east Asia was their conflict with the Portuguese and the English merchants.

The French:

The French were the first among the European nations that desired for commercial relations with the countries of the east, but as it happened, they were the last to come into the field of eastern commerce and enter into competition with other European companies. The French and the Dutch merchants became mutually hostile and the English merchants rendered help to the Dutch in their rivalry with the French. In 1693, the newly built French factory at Pondichery was captured by the European powers there was restoration of mutual conquests and the Dutch returned Pondichery to the French in 1697.

MERCANTILISM:

Mercantilism, as a theoretical system, has been impossible to define. It becomes more intelligible as a system of fiscal expediency by which the government and certain favored organization jointly extract income from the population. This view has been carefully articulated and illustrated by Ekelund and Tollisin (1981), but traces of the argument go back quite far mercantilism is an economic theory where the government seeks to regulate the economy and trade in order to promote domestic industry—often at the expense of other countries. In mercantilism, primary duty of the state is to enhance and maintain both national wealth and national power:
to defend the country. Mercantilism is associated with policies which restrict imports, increase stocks of gold and protect domestic industries. Mercantilism stands in contrast to the theory of free trade—which argues countries economic well being can be best improved through the reduction of tariffs and fair free trade.

The theory of free trade suggests, that a country can increase its economic welfare by cutting tariffs— even if these tariff cuts are not reciprocated. Free trade enables countries to specialize in producing certain goods. Therefore, they can produce a higher output and benefit from lower average costs. This is important for industries with high fixed costs. Free trade means that domestic monopolies will face more competition encourages firms to costs and be more efficient of colonies, e.g. making colonies buy from empire country and taking control of colonies wealth. Undervaluation of currency, e.g. Government buying foreign currency assets to keep the exchange rate undervalued and make exports more competitive. Government subsidy of an industry for unfair advantage. A surge of protectionist sentiment, e.g. U S tariffs on Chinese imports, and U S policies to ‘buy American. There are so many criticisms, Adom smith’s ‘The wealth of nations’ (1776), argued for benefits of free trade and criticized the inefficiency of monopoly.

FOUNDATION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE:

The east India company was founded by a royal charter on 31 December 1600, as a joint stock company of London merchants uniting to combat Dutch competition in eastern trade. It was given monopoly of all trade from England to the east and was permitted, even in an age dominated by mercantilist ideas, to carry bullion out of the country to finance its trade. The company formally started trading in India from 1613 after settling scores with the Portuguese, who had arrived
at the scene earlier. A Farman from Mughal emperor Jahangir gave them permission to establish their factories or ware houses in India, the first factory being set up in Surat in the western coast. In 1617 Jahangir received sir Thomas Rao as a resident English envoy in his court. This was the modest beginning from where the company gradually extended its trading activities to other parts of India, with Bombay, Calcutta and madras emerging by the end of the seventeenth century as three major centers of its activities. political expansion started from the middle of the eighteenth century, and within hundred years almost the whole of India was under its control. P.J Marshall has argued that until 1784, there was no conscious or consistent British policy for political conquest in India and even after the 1780’s, argues C.A Baily, the imperial expansion was primarily motivated by the fiscal and military needs of the company, rather than interests of trade-the free traders nothing more than the fly on the wheel”.

By the mid-seventeenth century, the company had a score of factories and by the end of the century was firmly ensconced in the three major coastal cities of madras (1640), Bombay (1668) and Calcutta (1690) the expansionist politics of the English east India company has often been studied in the context of mercantilism that persuaded states in Europe to augment their treasure reserves and encourage merchants and corporations to gain economic concessions by the use of force if necessary. The expansion of the empire in India in the second half of the eighteenth century marked, according to P.J Cain and A.G Hopkins, an extension of the “gentlemanly capitalism”, upheld by an alliance between landed interests and financial power that was in ascendancy in London after 1688; and that was the reason why “revenue became and remained the central preoccupation of imperial policy. It all started in Bengal, which in the early eighteenth century had became very important in the structure of the company’s trade at the
expense of the west coast, particularly Bombay Surat and Malabar, as Bengal goods came to comprise nearly 60 percent of English imports from Asia. The foundation of Calcutta in 1690 and its fortification in 1696 were followed by the grant of zamindari rights in three villages of Kolkata, Sultanuti and Gobindapur two year later. The outbreak of the Austrian succession war in Europe in 1740 brought in hostilities between the English and the French companies to India. In 1757, the English east India company took the first major step in building the Indian empire. At plassey, its army under colonel Robert clive vanquished the forces of the Bengal nawab siraj –ud-daulah, there by setting the sage for a formal induction of the company into the state’s political structure. Until this historic date , the English east India company like its Dutch and French counter parts had functioned as traders, over bearing and grasping , but conforming nevertheless to the sovereignty of the realm . the trading interests of the European companies were largely dictated by the demand for spices and pepper in Europe and were supported by a complex system of intra-asian trade in cloth in the Indian ocean. The companies in varying degrees, allowed their servants to participate in the trade of the Indian ocean to compensate for low salaries with the result that the servants and private traders became over time a powerful lobby that urged political expansion. In the battle of plassey , in which Siraj was finally defeated by Clive . it had profound political impact, as fugitive siraj was soon captured and put to death and the new Nawab Mirjafer became a puppet in the hands of the English. In December 1763 Mir Kasim fled from Bengal and tried to form a grand alliance with the Mughal emperor shah Alam II and Shuja-Ud-Daula of Awadh. With the victory over the Buxar, in 1764, the company treated the defeated Mughal emperor with respect , because of his continuing symbolic significance in eighteenth century Indian politics. Indeed, not before 1857 the British over
formally repudiated the sovereignty of the Mughal emperor. In return, by the treaty of Allahabad of 1765, shah Alam granted the company the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar, Orissa- in other words, absolute control over the lucrative resources of the prosperous Bengal Subah. As eastern India thus came under control of the company by 1765, the context for expansion in the south was provided by the Anglo-French rivalry. the French were the last among the European powers to arrive in India; but they were the first to conceive the ambitious project of building a territorial empire in this subcontinent. Their main centre at Pondichery was founded in 1614 and was raised to great political prominence by Dupleix, the most illustrious French governor general in India. He first became the governor of the French settlement of Chander Nagore in Bengal in 173 and within ten years French trade from this centre increased appreciably. The succession disputes at both Carnatic and Hyderabad provided the French governor general Dupleix an opportunity to intervene in Indian politics and secure thereby important territorial and financial concessions. The outbreak of the seven years war in Europe between English and France in 1756 provided the context for the third and decisive round of Anglo-French conflict in south India.

In course of few years, Mysore’s boundaries had stretched from the Krishna in the north to the Malabar coast in the west, which inevitably brought it into conflict with its Indian neighbours, notably Hyderabad and the Marathas. And the two were often in collusion with the English, who suspected Mysore’s friendship with the French. There were four rounds of battle between the company and Mysore, before the latter could be finally taken over in 1799. In the first Anglo-Mysore war, the Marathas and the Nizam were with the British against Haidar Ali; in the second, they joined hands with Haidar against the British at the end of this war the company annexed Dindigal, Brahmahal and Malabar.
A few years later, the specter of a French resurgence and Tipu’s secret negotiations with them gave a pretext to lord Wellesley to move decisively for the final round of colonial aggression. In 1799 Srirangapatnam, the capital of Mysore, fell to the company, while Tipu died defending it. Mysore, them once again placed under the former Wodeyar dynasty, was brought under the ‘subsidiary alliance’ system of lord Wellesley. This meant an end to the independent state of Mysore. Under this system, it would not hence forth enter into any relationship with other European powers; a contingent of company army would be stationed in Mysore and the provision for its maintenance would come from its treasury. Part of Mysore territory was given to the nizam who had already accepted a ‘subsidiary alliance’; and parts of it, such as Wynad, Coimbatore, canera and sunda, were directly annexed by the company. The states like Awadh had been drawn into the dragnet of imperial expansion through the medium of the subsidiary alliance system. Awadh became, from very early on, a key region - it was here that the company experimented with indirect rule, carried out through its resident and designed to manipulate the state and exploit resources for its own gain.

Mean while, the sudden growth of the company’s cotton trade with China through Bombay from Gujarat made them concerned about the security of Deccan, then under the control of the Maratha confederacy.

In north India too, there had been by now significant acquisition of territories. Ever since the victory at Buxar and the treaty of Allahabad, Awadh was serving as a buffer state between the company’s position in Bengal and the turbulent politics in north India, particularly imperiled by Maratha depredations. British strategic interests in Awadh were secured by the stationing of a resident at the court of Lucknow in 1775 and the positioning of a permanent British
garrison in Awadh, to be paid for by Nawab Shuja-Ud-Daula through the payment of a subsidy.

Anglo-Maratha relations became a significant theme in the decades following Paniput (1761) when the process of Maratha expansion had been checked by the Afghan ruler Ahmad Shah Abdali. The second Maratha revival largely inspired by the able Madhav Rao did not go unnoticed by the English east India company which preferred to by pass them until the 1770s. the second Maratha revival under the young peshwa Madhav Rao was able for a while to withstand the disaffected factions in the court in poona. Prominent in fomenting disaffection was the peshwa’s uncle Raghunath Rao, whose intrigues and ambitions destabilized internal affairs. These were taken advantage of by other Maratha sardars as well as by the nizam of Hyderabad. Factional conflicts as well as the post-paniput confusion had repercussions on the confederacy –in most cases, succession-related disputes put pressure on the local administration. By 1769, however, Maratha influence was restored in the region and through 1770, under the leadership of mahadji sindhia, Maratha control remained intact. The first Anglo-maratha war did not produce any decisive results and believed Hastings’ expectations. In January 1779, the British signed a convention at wadgaon, which caused them to lose the meager advantages that they had gained so far. The second Maratha war broke out in 1803 with only the Sindhia and the raja of beras confronting the company. The war took place in multiple theatres and on two fronts; in the deccan where the forces of the sindhia were defeated at Assaye by Arthus Wellesley, and in north India where the bulk of sindhia’s forces commanded by perron confronted the sepoys of lord lake. The dismantling of the Maratha confederancy in 1818 was linked in an important way with the problem of containing the Pindaris in central India.
The only other major power now left in north India were the Sikhs of Punjab. The consolidation of Sikh power had taken place under Ranajit Singh in the late eighteenth century. The ultimate British aim was full annexation of Punjab, which was achieved by governor general lord Dalhousie after the victory in the second Anglo-Sikh war in 1849. In 1824-28 began the company’s first Burma war, which brought the annexation of assam and Nagaland in north eastern India as well as arakan and tenasserim in lower Burma. In 1830 cachar was added to company’s territory; coorg was later annexed in 1834 by lord Bentinck. Other control of the company during the nineteenth century, US empire itself or more precisely, the security of the empire became an argument justifying further imperial expansion. The success of the east India company also depended on its capacity to mobilize greater resources than its rivals. The soldiers fighting at the frontline for the company’s army where better fed and regularly paid in contrast to those servicing the Mughal successor state. The company gradually reduced this dependence and turned it upside down by establishing control over revenue resources, which became vital for financing trade as well as further conquests. Revenue considerations got the company involved in administration and thus there was the progression from military ascendancy to domination of territory from indirect rule to direct annexation.

COLONIAL APPARATUS OF RULE:

As the empire grew in size and its resources needed to be controlled, so did the need for an efficient and authoritative administrative system increase. The idea of improvement led to the introduction of British principles of justice and uniformity under a civil authority exercised by British personnel. Good laws and sound administration, it was hoped, would lead to the freeing of individual initiative from despotism, irrational customs and traditions.
Judicial system:

The grant of Diwani in 1765 gave the east India company the right to collect revenue in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, but the Nawabi administration and the Mughal system remained in place. The judicial administration of the Subah remained initially in the hands of the Indian officers between 1765 and 1772 and the Mughal system was followed in both civil and criminal justice. However, this acceptance of the indigenous system depended to a large extent on the colonizer’s understanding and interpretation of it. When Warren Hastings took charge as governor in 1772, he decided to take full control of the justice system and he had no doubts whatsoever as to why he should: through such a measure, he responded, “the people of this country would be accustomed to the company’s sovereignty”. One major reason for arresting Reza Khan in 1772 and for keeping him in confinement without trial for nearly two years was to get rid of the most powerful obstacle to this project of eliminating Indian agents from the administration of justice.

Under the new system of 1772, each district was to have two courts, a civil court or Diwani Adalat and a criminal court or faujdari adalat. The civil courts in India were to be presided over by the European district collectors, and they were to be assisted by Maulvis and Brahman pundits interpreting indigenous laws for their understanding. There would be an appeal court in Calcutta, which too would be presided over by the president and two members of the council. The criminal courts were to be under a Kazi and mufti; but they were to be supervised by the European collectors. In civil justice system further changes took place between 1773 and 1781, partly in response to the demands of revenue collectors and partly in difference to the why principle of separating executive functions from the administration of justice. According to the plans worked out by Hastings and sir
Elijah Impey, the chief justice of the Calcutta high court, district collectors were divested of their judicial duties. In the area of civil justice, instead of district courts, initially six provincial courts, later replaced by eighteen Mofussil courts were created and they were to be presided over by only the European covenanted officers of the company, who would be designated ‘judges’ for this purpose. For some time the new supreme court, created by the regulating act of 1773, acted as an appeal court; but its conflicts with the supreme council over definition of jurisdiction led to the confinement of its authority to the city of Calcutta and to matters related to factories dependent on fort William. Among with this Europeanisation, which was the most dominant and visible feature of the judicial reforms of this period, there was also another coherent trend, and that was towards systematization or institutionalization of the civil justice system. The code of 1781 prescribed specific rules and regulations to be followed in all the civil courts down to the lowest level and all judicial orders were henceforth to be in writing.

There was a certain reversal of this system in 1787, when once again the collector was given the duty of administering civil justice. It was Lord Cornwallis and his code of 1793 that finally set the rule of safeguard for property rights against abuse of power by revenue officials and their agents. The new system provided for a hierarchy of courts from Zillah (district) and city courts to four provincial courts and the Sardar Diwani Addalat with appellate jurisdiction. All the courts were to be headed by European judges, with provision for appointment of ‘native commissioners’. In British India, however, the judicial administration now looked significantly different from what it was under the Mughal rule, and these changes to ordinary Indians found hard to comprehend.

Police:

When the east India company took over Diwani in
1765, the Mughal police system was under the control of the Faujdars, who were in charge of their Sarkars or rural districts; the kotwal were in charge of the towns, while the village watchmen were paid and controlled by the zamindars. For the company officials, like other departments, the police administration too seemed to be need of European supervision, as every crime was a direct affront to their authority. The faujdari system continued with minor modifications until 1781. In 1793, lord Conwallis decided to divert the zamindars of their policing duties, and instead divided the districts into thanas or units of police jurisdiction of twenty to thirty square miles, each placed under a new officer called daroga, who was to be appointed and supervised by the magistrates. The daroga system was formally abolished in 1812, and the supervision of the village police was vested in the collector, who was now responsible for revenue, police and magisterial functions at the same time. The new model was first experimented in Sind when it was conquered by sir Charls Napier in 1843. Discarding the previous practice of trying to adapt the indigenous systems to the needs of the colonial state, he created a separate police department with its own officers, following the model of the royal Irish constabulary, which he found to be ideally suited to the colonial conditions.

The police commission appointed in 1860 provided for a basic structure of a police establishment for the Indian empire that was enacted in the police act of 1861. And that structure, with only minor adjustments, remained unchanged for the next century of British rule. The police commission of 1902 provided for the appointment of educated Indians to the position of officers in the police force; but they ‘stopped in rank where the European officer began. According to David Arnold, a “police raj” gradually emerged between the revolt of 1857 and the transfer of power in 1947.
Army:

The evolution of the company’s army was integrally connected to the development of its Indian empire. In the eighteenth century, royal forces, particularly the navy, were often dispatched to India on lease to the company to help it out at times of trouble; from very early on there was an attempt to raise a permanent company’s army in India. The tradition of recruiting peasant armies had been developing in north India since the sixteenth century and this created a ‘military labor market’. It was the tradition that the east India company appropriated as it started recruiting its own army, which came to be known as the sepoy army. The French had first initiated this tradition of recruiting an Indian army in 1721-29. The recruitment of the east India company’s army Seema Alavi argues, “was central to the development of the company’s political sovereignty”, which rested on a monopoly of power. The army not only conquered territories, it also protected the empire against real or imagined internal threats; it handled peasant rebellions against high revenue demands, made alliance with Indian elites, collected information about Indian society and economy.

The recruitment of the company’s army in the eighteenth century was not just building on the existing traditions of the north Indian military labor markets; those traditions were being adapted to British imperial preferences. Thus as the empire expanded, the company’s army came to incorporate a variety of social groups and a number of military traditions, which had to be accommodated in a careful balancing game and power had to be shared with the local elites. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the army remained, as before, the most effective instrument of coercion. It provided guarantee of stability to the raj against all sorts of civil disturbances. The army was quarantined in the garrisons spread across India, deliberately kept at a low level.
of literacy and insulted from all political influences.

Indian Civil Service:

The civilian bureaucracy, which controlled the army by pulling the financial strings if not anything else and ran the Indian empire with its help, were meant only to implement policies formed at home. The expansion of empire, however, increased the responsibilities of governance and required an efficient bureaucracy, trained in Indian languages and laws. By the 1830’s, however, the administrative responsibilities of the bureaucracy in India had increased immensely, as the district collector had once again combined in his office the revenue collecting responsibilities, magisterial authority and also some judicial powers. The charter act of 1833 introduced competition for recruitment; but it was limited competition among the candidates nominated by the directors and therefore could not improve the situation. Finally, the charter act of 1833 introduced the principle of open competition; civil servants for India were henceforth to be recruited through an examination open to all “natural born subject of her majesty”. The Haileybury college was abolished in 1858 and the civil service commission henceforth recruited civil servant through an examination held annually in England.

It was lord Ripon who realized the political importance of the Indian middle classes and argued that their continued exclusion from administration might eventually spell danger for the empire. The structure of the civil service was ultimately reformed in 1892, on the basis of the recommendations of a public service commission submitted five years ago. The new regulations retained the exclusive status of the covenanted civil service and called it the Indian civil service (ICS). In response to the demands, the government of India act of 1919 finally provided for a separate, not simultaneous, recruitment examination to the ICS to be held in India; and under its
provision, the first examination was held in Allahabad in February 1922. As a result, by 1941 the Indians outnumbered the Europeans in this charmed circle of Indian civil service. However, the gradual Indianisation of the civil service also reduced its as an apparatus of authoritarian rule for the empire and paved the way for a transfer of power.

STAGES IN THE ECONOMIC CONSOLIDATION

It is to be noted that colonialism goes through several stages during which the fact of subordination is constant, but the forms or patterns of subordination undergo changes over time according to changes in the historical development of capitalism as a world system, the place of the colonialism in the colony itself. Similarly, while the appropriation of the colony’s surplus by the metropolis is a constant feature, the forms of this appropriation undergo changes from one stage to another. Stages of colonialism are thus basically differentiated by these two features—patterns of subordination and of surplus appropriation. In reality, colonies underwent a fundamental transformation under colonialism. They were gradually integrated into the world of modern capitalism. The conditions of economic, social, cultural and political backwardness in the colonies and former colonies—the initial conditions from which they start the development process after political freedom—are not those of their pre-colonial past, they are the creation of the colonial period, the era in which there occurred “the onslaught of modernization from outside”. Far from being traditional, these conditions signify the evolution of the traditional pre-colonial societies into colonial societies.

Traditionally colonialism is seen as the result of the ideology or personality of colonial administrators or, at the most, of colonial policy which is itself guided by the first two. Thus, if different colonial administrators can be shown to have
different personal motives, ideas and policies, it is concluded that there is no such thing as colonialism in any meaningful sense, except as foreign political rule. Similarly, many economists dealing with development theory, today, criticize the role of colonialism, but they consider merely the political domination aspect of colonialism. In fact, both aspects and consequences of colonialism operated simultaneously. The so-called positive aspect was as integral a part of, and contributed effectively to the structure of, colonialism as was the negative aspect. The positive and negative stages of colonialism were rather stages in the cognition and understanding of the colonial phenomenon by its victims. Thus many colonial and metropolitan intellectuals, including Marx before 1857, failed to grasp the basic features of colonial societies in the early years of their structuring and accordingly had a certain positive image of colonialism. Later, as the reality surfaced, they were able to see its essentially negative features. Instead of seeing this change as an aspect of intellectual and political history linked to the early stages of colonialism, these intellectuals assumed that the reality had undergone a drastic reversal. Hobson’s and Lenin’s writings regarding a new stage of imperialism in the last quarter of the nineteenth century added fuel to this misunderstanding.

Historically: colonialism developed through three distinct stages, each stage representing a different pattern of subordination of the colonial policies, ideologies, impact and response of the colonial people. The change from one stage to the other as partially the consequence of the changing patterns of the metropolitan’s social, economic and political development, and of its changing position in the world economy and polity. Stages of colonialism in different colonies are not bound by the same time horizons, but the basic content of the different stages is broadly the same in all the colonies. Moreover, the stages do not exist in pure forms; in a sense
each stage is an abstraction. nor is there a sharp break between one stage and another. Forms of surplus appropriation and other features of colonialism in earlier stages persist in later ones. Each stage, however, is marked by distinct, dominant, qualitative features which demarcate it from the other stages. It also to be noted that a particular form of surplus appropriation may become atrophied in a particular colony because of distinct historical factors. Thus the third stages of colonialism, finance imperialism, was atrophied in India; the second, free—trade stage, in Indonesia and the first and second stages, mercantilist and free trade in Egypt.

Stages of colonialism:

First stage: monopoly trade and revenue appropriation

During the first stage of colonialism the basic objectives of colonialism were: (i) the monopoly of trade with the colony vis-à-vis other European merchants and the colony’s traders and producers, and(ii) the direct appropriation of revenue or surplus through the use of state power. Whenever craftsmen or other producers were employed on account of the colonial state, corporation or merchants, their surplus was directly seized, not in the manner of industrial capitalists but that of merchant usurers.

The colonial state or corporations required large financial resources to wage wars in the colony and on the seas, and to maintain naval forces, forts, armies and trading posts. Direct appropriation of the colony’s surplus was also needed to finance the purchase of colonial products since the colonies did not import sufficient qualities of metropolitan products. Directly appropriated surplus also served as a source of product to the merchants, corporations and the exchequer of the metropolis. The large number of Europeans employed in the colony also appropriated a large part of the colony’s
surplus directly, through extortion, corruption and high salaries.

It is to noted that during the first stage of colonialism, (i) the element of plunder and direct seizure of surplus was very strong and (2) there was no significant import of metropolitan manufactures into the colony. A basic feature of colonial rule during this period was that no basic changes were introduced in the colony in administration, the judicial system, transport and communication, methods of agricultural or industrial production, forms of business management or economic organization, education, culture and social organization. Because the colonial made of surplus appropriation via purchase of the colony’s urban handicrafts and plantation and other products, through a buyer’s monopoly and control over its revenues, did not require basic socio-economic and administrative changes in the colony. Such a mode of surplus appropriation could be super-imposed over its existing economic, social, cultural, ideological and political structures. Also, the colonial power did feel the need to penetrate the villages in the colony further than their indigenous predecessors had done, so long as their economic surplus was successfully sucked out. This lack of need for change was reflected in the ideology of the rulers. There was, for one, no ideology of development; not a changed colonial economy but the existing economy of the colony was to be the basis of economic exploitation. There was also, therefore, not much need to criticize the colony’s civilization, religions, laws and so on, for they were not seen as obstacles to the then current modes of surplus appropriation. The need was to understand them so that the wheels of administration might more smoothly. Criticism was confined to the missionaries.

Second stage: exploitation through trade

The newly developing industrial and commercial
interests in the metropolis, and their ideologies, began in time to attack the existing of exploitation of the colony with a view to making it serve their interests. Moreover, as it became clear that colonial control was to be a long-term phenomenon, the metropolitan capitalist class as a whole demanded forms of surplus appropriation with could not destroy the golden goose. It realized that the plundering form of surplus appropriation is less capable of reproducing the conditions for its own reproduction than other forms. This is the secret of the critique of the colony’s exploitation which is often made during the first stage by the liberals and ‘radical’ democrats of the metropolis. In the end, sooner or later, the administrative policies and economic structure of the colony came to be determined by the interests of the industrial bourgeoisie of the metropolis.

The essence of the second stage of colonialism was the making of the colony into a subordinate trading partner which could export raw materials and import manufactures. The colony’s social surplus was to be appropriated through trade on the basis of selling cheap and buying cheap. This stage of colonialism could even embrace countries which retained political freedom. Many of the critics of this stage of colonialism have argued that the exploitation of the colony occurs through the terms of trade which on the whole move against primary products. This is not always true export prices of the metropolis may fail faster than import prices, reflecting falling costs due to technical improvement and grater and better use of machinery, partly made possible by expanding trade and widening markets. Rising export prices and falling export prices may expand exports fast enough to lead to rising productivity in the industrializing metropolis and retarded productivity in the raw material producing colony. Hence, the basic question regarding this stage of colonialism is what happens to productivity in the metropolis and the colony. The
second stage of colonialism generated a liberal imperialist political ideology among sections of the imperialist statesmen and administrators, who talked of training the colonial people in the arts of democracy and self-government. It was believed that if the colonial people ‘learnt’ the virtues of law and order, sanctity of business contract, free trade and economic development, the economic relationship lying at the heart of this stage of colonialism could be perpetuated even if the metropolitan power was to withdraw direct political and administrative control.

Third stage: foreign investments and competition for colonies

A new stage of colonialism was ushered in as a result of several major changes in the world economy: spread of industrialization to several countries of Europe, north America and Japan; intensification of industrialization as a result of the application of scientific knowledge to industry; and further unification of the world market due to a revolution in the means of international transport. There now occurred an intense struggle for new, secure and exclusive markets, and sources of agricultural and mineral raw materials and foods. Moreover, expanded reproduction at home and extended exploitation of colonies and semi-colonies abroad produced large accumulations of capital in the developed capitalist countries. There occurred simultaneously the concentration of capital and merger of banking capital with industrial capital in several countries. This led to large-scale export of capital and search for fields and areas where the imperialist countries could have a monopoly in capital investment. All three aspects, namely, markets, sources of raw materials and capital exports, were interlinked, and none of them should be over emphasized at the cost of the others. For example, investment abroad would sustain the rate of profit at home (metropolis), aid the production of raw materials and create a market for home industrial products directly or indirectly. As the struggle
for the division and redivision of the world among the imperialist countries was intensified, fresh use was found for the older colonies. Their social surpluses and man power could be used as counters in this struggle: colonialism at this stage also served an important political and ideological purpose in the metropolis. Nationalism or chauvinism, adventure, and the glorification of empire could be used to tone down the growing social divisions at home, by stressing the common interests in the empire. More specifically, the ideology of empire and glory were used to counter the growth of popular democracy and the introduction of adult franchise, which could have posed a danger to the political domination of the capitalist class and which increased the importance of the ideological instruments of hegemony over society. The idea of empire played a increasingly important role in constituting this hegemony.

The major reason why metropolitan capital was not invested in these colonies to a significant extent was that their economies had been wrecked or underdeveloped during the second stage of colonialism. If foreign capital was to be invested in the colonies, the resulting products had to be in the main sold in the colony; but the failure to make them reproductive colonies during the second stage now stood in the way. More than capitalism at home, it was capitalism in the colonies that was in a moribund stage! Consequently, even the limited foreign capital was invested in only those agricultural or industrial enterprises whose products had a ready market outside the colony, or invested in providing infrastructure for such exports. The colonial market was of little use to the foreign capitalists, for it had already been captured, squeezed to the maximum, and wrecked, it must, however, be again stressed that as potential absorbers of foreign capital, these colonies continued to remain Eldorado powerfully affecting colonial policy. efforts at the transformation of the colony’s
economy, society and culture continued during this stage, through once again with paltry results. However, now there developed a tendency to abandon social and cultural modernization especially as the anti-imperialist forces began to take up the task. Colonial administration increasingly assumed a neutral stance on social and cultural questions and then began to support social and cultural reaction in the name of preserving indigenous institutions.

According to Bipan Chandra, it may be pointed out that colonialism metropolitan control and the colonial state are best illuminated through a study of the numerous inner contradictions of colonialism. This is turn leads to two other contradictions: a) the external one between the colonial people and colonialism, leading to the subjective process of the colonial people’s struggle for the overthrow of colonialism; and b) the internal one which trends to make the colony increasingly ‘useless’ or incapable of serving the needs of metropolitan capitalism on an extended scale.

The structure of government and the economic policies of the British empire in India

Having acquired the vast empire, India, the east India company had to devise suitable methods of government to control and administer it. The administrative policy of the company underwent frequent changes during the long period between 1757 and 1857. The administrative machinery of the government of India was designed and developed to serve these ends. The main emphasis in this respect was placed on the maintenance of law and order so that trade with India and exploitation of its resources could be carried on without disturbance.

The structure of government:

When the officials of the east India company acquired control over Bengal in 1765, they had little intention of making
any innovations in its administration. They only desired to carry on their profitable trade and collect taxes for remission to England. From 1765 to 1772, in the period of the dual government, Indian officials were allowed to function as before but under the overall control of the British governor and British officials. The Indian officials had responsibility but no power while the company’s officials had power but no responsibility. In 1772 the company ended the dual government and undertook to administer Bengal directly through its own servants. But the evils inherent in the administration of a country by a purely commercial company soon came to the surface. The east India company was at this time a commercial body designed to trade with east. Moreover, its higher authority was situated in England, many thousands of kilometers away from India. The first important parliamentary act regarding the company’s affairs was the regulating act of 1773. This act made changes in the constitution of the court of directors of the company and subjected their actions to the supervision of the British government.

The regulating act soon broke down in practice. It had not given the British government effective and decisive control over the company. The act had also failed to resolve the conflict between the company and its opponents in England who were daily growing stronger and more vocal. Moreover, the company remained extremely vulnerable to the attacks of its enemies as the administration of its Indian possessions continued to be corrupt, oppressive, and economically disastrous. The defects of the regulating and the exigencies of British policies necessitated the passing in 1784 of another important act known as the pitt’s India act. This act gave the British government supreme control over the company’s affairs and its administration in India. It established six commissioners for the affairs of India, popularly known as the
board of control, including two cabinet ministers. The board of control was to guide and control the work of the court of directors and the government of India. The act placed the government of India in the hands of the governor-general and a council of three, so that if the governor-general could get the support of even one member, he could have his way with this act began a new phase of the British conquest of India. While the east India company became the instrument of British national policy, India was to be made to serve the interests of all sections of the ruling classes of Britain.

By the charter act of 1813, the trade monopoly of the company in India was ended and trade with India was thrown open to all British subjects. But trade in tea and trade with China were still exclusive to the company. The charter act of 1833 brought the company’s monopoly of tea trade and trade with China to an end. The government of India continued to be run by the company under the strict control of the board of control. The chief aim of the British was to enable them to exploit India economically to the maximum advantage of various British interests, ranging from the company to the Lancashire manufacturers.

British economic policies in India:

Commercial policy: from 600 to 1757 the east India company role in India was that of a trading corporation which brought goods or precious metals into India and exchanged them for Indian goods like textiles and spices, which it sold abroad. Naturally, it tried constantly to open new markets for Indian goods in Britain and other countries. Thereby, it increased the export of Indian manufacturers and thus encouraged their production. This is the reason why India rulers tolerated and even encouraged the establishment of the company’s factories in India. The British manufacturers put pressure on their government to restrict and prohibit the sale of
Indian goods in England. By 1720, laws had been passed forbidding the wears or use of printed or dyed cotton cloth.

After the battle of Plassey in 1757, the patterns of the company’s commercial relations with India underwent a qualitative changes. Now the company could use its political control over Bengal to acquire monopolistic control over trade and production and push its Indian trade. The industrial revolution in Britain completely transformed Britain’s economy and its economic relations with India. During the second half of the eighteenth century and the first few decades of the nineteenth century, Britain underwent profound social and economic transformation, and British industry developed and expanded rapidly on the basis of modern machines, the factory system, and capitalism.

According to Bipan Chandra, this development was aided by several factors. British overseas trade had been expanding rapidly in the previous markets by means of war and colonialism. These export markets enabled its export industries to expand production rapidly, utilizing the latest techniques in production and organization. Second, there was sufficient capital accumulated in the country for investment in new machinery and the factory system. Moreover, this capital was concentrated, not in the hands of the feudal class which would waste it in luxurious living, but in the hands of merchants and industrialists who were keen to invest it in trade and industry. Third, rapid increase in population met the need of the growing industries for more and cheaper labor. The population of Britain increased rapidly after 1740; it doubled in fifty years after 1780. Fourth, Britain had a government which was under the influence of commercial and manufacturing interests and which, therefore, fought other countries determinedly for markets and colonies. Fifth, the demands for increased production were met by developments in technology. Britain’s rising industry could base itself on the
inventions of Hargreaves, Watt, Crompton, Cartwright, and many others. The industrial revolution transformed British society in a fundamental manner. Britain became increasingly urbanized as a result of the industrial revolution. Two entirely new classes of society were born, the industrial capitalists, who owned the factories, and workers who hired out their labor on daily wages. The rise of a powerful class of manufacturers had an important impact on Indian administration and its policies. The interest of this class in the empire was very different from that of the East India Company. It did not gain from the monopolization of the export of Indian handicrafts or the direct appropriation of Indian revenues. At this class grew in number and strength and political influence, it began to attack the trade monopoly of the company. According to R.C. Dutt, in his famous work, the economic history of India, the efforts of the parliamentary select committee of 1812 was “to discover how they (Indian manufacturers) could be replaced by British manufacturers, and how British industries could be promoted at the expense of Indian industries.

The British manufacturers looked upon the East India Company, its monopoly of eastern trade, and its methods of exploitation of India through control of India’s revenues and export trade, to be the chief obstacles in the fulfillment of their dreams. Between 1793 and 1813, they launched a powerful campaign against the compact and its commercial privileges and finally succeeded in 1813 in abolishing its monopoly of Indian trade. With this events, a new phase in Britain’s economic relations with India began. Agricultural India was to be made an economic colony of industrial England.

The government of India now followed a policy of free trade or unrestricted entry of British goods. Indian handicraft were exposed to the fierce and unequal competition of the machine-made products of British and faced extinction. Indian
hand-made goods were unable to compete against the much cheaper products of British mills which had been rapidly improving their productive capacity by using inventions and a wider use of steam power. Instead of exporting manufacturers India was now forced to export raw materials like raw cotton and raw silk which British industries needed urgently, or plantation products like indigo and tea or food grains which were in short supply in Britain. Thus, the commercial policy of the East India company after 1813 was guided by the needs of British industry. Its main aim was to transform India into a consumer of British manufacturers and a supplier of raw materials.

The drain of wealth:

The British exported to Britain part of India’s wealth and resources for which India got no adequate economic or material return. Thus ‘economic drain’ was peculiar to British rule. The drain of wealth from Bengal began in 1757 when the company’s servants began to carry home immense fortunes extorted from Indian rulers, zamindars, merchants and the common people. In 1765 the company acquired the Diwani of Bengal and thus gained control over its revenues. The company, even more than its servants, soon directly organized the drain. It began to purchases were known as ‘investments’, thus, through ‘investments’, Bengal’s revenue was sent to England. The drain took the form of an excess of India’s exports over its imports, for which India got no return. The drain went on increasing after 1858, though the British administrators and imperialist writers now began to deny its existence. By the end of the nineteenth century it constituted nearly 6 percent of India’s national income and one-third of its national savings. The wealth drained out of India played an important part in financing Britain’s century and the beginning of the nineteenth century, that is, during the period of Britain’s early industrialization.
Development of means of transport and communications:

Up to the middle of the nineteenth century, the means of transport in India were backward. They were confined to bullock-cart, and packhorse. The British rulers soon realized that a cheap and easy system of transport was necessity – if British manufacturers were to flow into India on a large scale and her raw materials secured for British industries. They introduced steamships on the rivers and set about improving the roads. Works on the grand trunk road from Calcutta to Delhi begun in 1839 and completed in the 1850s. Efforts were also made to link by road the major cities, ports and markets of the country. But real improvement in transport only came with the advent of the railways. The first railway began by George Stephenson was put on the rails in England in 1814. Railways developed rapidly in that country during the 1830s and 1840s. The earliest suggestion to build a railway in India was made in Madras in 1831. The first railway line running from Bombay to Thana was opened to traffic in 1853. Lord Dalhousie, who became Governor-General in India in 1849, was an ardent advocate of rapid railway construction. The British also established an efficient and modern postal system and introduced the telegraph. The first telegraph line from Calcutta to Agra was opened in 1853. Lord Dalhousie introduced postage stamps. He also reduced postal rates and charged a uniform rate of Anna for a letter all over the land.

LAND REVENUE POLICY

The acquisition of the Diwani in 1765 brought the company face to face with the real problem of revenue assessment and collection. As far as the company was concerned, its immediate objective was to ensure revenue maximization with the least administrative responsibility and to somehow balance the existing set up with its own authority. Under the old system, land revenue was the responsibility of
zamindars and other intermediaries like Amils and whose transactions were supported by an extended credit structure. There were revenue farmers as well who made a bid in the annual auctions. The company did not wish to immediately transform the system, although in its drive to secure revenue, it invested European supervisors with the authority to oversee tax collection. Revenue assessment were enhanced between 1765-66 and 1768-69, land revenue collection increased by 53.8 percent. This put severe pressure on the zamindars, who became increasingly indebted to local creditors as well as European officers. As early as 1770, the supervisors became collectors whose inroads into the local economy wreaked complete havoc. This, combined with the disastrous famine of 1770 in which one third of the population was wiped off, forced the company to seriously review. The situation in terms of both its responsibility as well as the land revenue settlements that could be introduced.

It was in the aftermath of the famine, that the company finally took the decision of standing forth as the dewan and of introducing a new system of revenue collection and management. It was left to Warren Hastings to initiate a new system in 1772, known as the farming system. European district collectors were entrusted with revenue administration while the actual revenue collection was farmed out to the highest bidders. This system failed to extract as much as possible without any heed to the condition of the producers. The escalating burden of revenue demand on the peasant created an unworkable situation, which Lord Cornwallis was asked to address immediately. Since the Diwani, the British had to grapple with the principles on which they would regulate and assess the collection of land revenue and with the notion of land tax being the most reliable source of revenue. But by the 1770s, this became a most reliable source of revenue. But by the 1770s, this became a more urgent concern.
and began to be framed within conceptions of private property could not be effective or even put into operation, were many. As Eric Stokes observes, ‘only by limiting the land tax so as to leave a private rent could stable property rights be established. Such was the chain if reasoning which occurred instinctively to the generation of Englishmen for whom Arthur had spoken, when he declared that the magic of property turned sand into gold’. Cornwallis was part of this generation and was more than convinced that once a land settlement was fixed in perpetuity, the boards of revenue and the collectors would be deprived of all judicial and discretionary powers and their functions would be confined merely to the collection of statutory des. Additionally, the guarantee of private encourage all round growth and productivity.

The company needed Indian revenues to pay for its purchase of Indian handicrafts and other goods for exports, meet the cost of the conquest of the whole of India and the consolidation of British rule, pay for the employment of thousands of Englishmen in superior administrative and military positions at salaries that were fabulous by contemporary standards , and to meet the costs of economic and administrative charges needed to enable colonialism to fully penetrate Indian villages and far-flung areas. In fact, nearly all the major changes in the administration and judicial system till 1813 were geared to the collection of land revenues. The Indian state time immemorial taken a part of the agricultural produce as land revenue. It had done so either directly through its servants or indirectly through intermediaries , such as zamindars , revenue farmers, etc., who collected the land revenue from the cultivator and kept a part of it as their commission. These intermediaries were primarily collectors of land revenue. Although they did sometimes own some land in the area from which they collected revenue.
The permanent settlement:

In 1765, the east India company acquired the Diwani, or control over the revenues, of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. In 1773, it decided to manage the land revenues directly. Warren Hastings auctioned the right to collect revenue to the highest bidders. But this experiment did not succeed. Though the amount of land revenue was pushed high by zamindars and other speculators bidding against each other, the actual expectations. This introduced instability in the company’s revenues at a time when the company was hard pressed for money. Moreover, neither the Ryot nor the zamindar would do anything to improve cultivation when they did not know what the next year’s revenue collector.

It was at this stage that the idea first emerged of fixing the land revenue at a permanent amount. Finally, after prolonged discussion and debate, the permanent settlement was introduced in Bengal and Bihar in 1793 by lord Cornwallis. It had two special features. First, the zamindars and revenue collectors were converted into so many land lords. They were not only to act as agents of the government in collecting land revenue from the Ryot but also to become the owners of the entire land in their zamindaris. Their right of ownership was made hereditary and transferable. Second, the zamindars were to give 10/11 th of the rental they derived from the peasantry to the state, keeping only 1/11 th for themselves.

The social foundation of new settlement was largely the old aristocracy of Bengal. The peasantry was completely excluded from the new settlement and in almost all cases bore the brunt of the settlement. their customary rights were reduced to being tenants. The enhanced level of revenue demand was borne by them with disastrous consequences. Subsequent regulations proved even more damaging as these gave zamindars the right to appropriate the property of tenants.
in cases of non fulfillment of rent obligations. Admittedly the richer strata of the peasantry was able to control influence and landed power at the village level, at least in some districts of Bengal, but this was by no means a pervasive phenomenon.

The most immediate effects of the settlement was the assurance of permanent land revenue. In the long run, this was not especially profitable as the share of the government in the total agricultural revenue tended to diminish. the land revenue demand, which was fixed at 90 percent of the rental in 1793, declined by the end of the nineteenth century to 28 percent. In Bengal proper, the percentage dwindled to 18.5 percent by 1940. It is important to note that the Bengal model was only partially adopted in Oorisa and Assam—it was felt that the freezing of revenue was not a viable option. Consequently in both provinces, revenue was increased from time to time. The impact of the settlement in reshaping Bengal’s landed society was not insignificant. Although the government had preferred to work with the traditional aristocracy, the obligations of revenue payment by a stipulated time and date affected many zamindars and the result was frequent sales that testified to a growing market in land. Between 1794 and 1807, land yielding about 41 percent of the revenue in Bengal and Bihar was sold in auctions. Benoy Chaudhari points out that in the case of the rise of new zamindari families in the early nineteenth century, the linkage with trade and capital accumulation proved critical.

The application of the permanent settlement remained confined to Bengal. In fact, very soon after cornwallis’ departure, there was a shift away from the Cornwallis system. In Bengal, there was no immediate appreciable increase in the government incomes while in England, especially in official circles of the company. There was a resurgence of utilitarian principles as well as a celebration of the idea of the folk, the original peoples that was a fall out of the romantic movement. Both these sets of ideas appealed to the new british officers.
who came to India and assumed charge of various ceded territories and learnt, like Thomas Munro for example, from their own experience, and considered new arrangements for rent collection and agricultural stability.

The initial fixation of revenue was made arbitrarily and without any consultations with the zamindars. The attempt of the official was to secure the maximum amount. The permanent zamindari settlement was later extended to Orissa, the northern districts of Madras, and the district of Varanasi. In parts of central India and Awadh the British introduced a temporary zamindari settlement under which the zamindars were made owners of land but the revenue they had to pay was periodically. Another group of landlords was created all over India when the government started the practice of giving land to persons who had rendered faithful service to the foreign rulers.

THE RYOTWARI SETTLEMENT

The establishment of British rule in south and south-western India brought new problems of land settlement. The officials believed that in these regions they were no zamindars with large estates with whom settlement of land revenue could be made and that the introduction of zamindari system could upset the existing state of affairs. Many Madras officials led by Reed and Munro recommended that settlement should be made directly with the actual cultivators under the system they proposed, which is known as the Ryotwari settlement, the cultivators were to be recognized as the owner of his plot of land subjects to the payment of land revenue. The Ryotwari settlement was in the end introduced in parts of the Madras and Bombay presidencies in the beginning of the nineteenth century. The settlement under the Ryotwari system was not made permanent. The supporters of the Ryotwari system claimed that it was a continuation of the state of affairs.
that had existed in the past. Munro said: “it is the system which has always prevailed in India”. The Ryotwari settlement was in the end introduced in parts of the madras and Bombay presidencies in the beginning of the nineteenth century. The settlement under the Ryotwari system was not made permanent. It was revised periodically after 20-30 years when the revenue demand was usually raised.

It was in 1801 that Thomas Munro introduced the Ryotwari system in the ceded districts and subsequently it began to be extended to the rest of the presidency by 1822. The beginnings had been made in 1792 in the Canara district. under the system, each field was to be surveyed, its output estimated and then converted into cash. Each field was registered in the name of the Raiyat or peasant, sometimes referred to as the patladar who was directly responsible for the payment of the revenue. The rates followed were meant to conform to precedent- Munro believed that the state share of the produce could not exceed one-third, and in practice also was flexible enough to reduce this. In that sense, the settlement was not permanent as it had to make allowances. In fact, the amount of land revenue varied from district to district and often, the cultivator was left with very little in north Arcot in 1808 there were villages where the Raiyat received just a quarter of the crop while in Coimbatore, the land revenue was estimated to have fallen from one third to one-quarter, Thanjavur was another favored district. But in principle there was the notion of a fixed revenue assignment that was predicated on the idea of the state being the main landlord.

Like the permanent settlement it aimed at creating propertied classes in land but this was to be vested with the peasantry and aimed to secure to the cultivators the fruits of their improvement. It also worked with the idea of a permanent assessment that alone could instill a sense of security, even if this could not be put to practice. Munro mentioned this in his
minutes, ‘in order to make the land generally saleable, to encourage the Ryots to improve it and to regard it as permanent hereditary property, the assessment must be fixed and more moderate in general than it is now and above all so clearly defined as not to be liable to increase from ignorance or practice’. The Ryotwari system was also applied to parts of the Bombay presidency in the areas corresponding to modern Maharashtra and Gujarat. The results of the settlement were important: it actually reduced revenue rates to a greater extent on poorer soils than on better ones. There was rapid extension of cultivation on waste lands. On the other hand the status of the patil was severely circumscribed. The social consequences of the new system have been a subjects of debate. Neil Charlesworth argued that the Ryotwari system introduced between 1840 and 1870 did usher in dramatic change in the agrarian structure of western India, and the reduction of the status of the patil to a mere government employee was part of an older process of erosion. Sumit Guha and Ravinder Kumar on the other hand argue that the alternations in the status of the village headmen had long term implications and fed into rural dissatisfaction that found expression in the Deccan riots of the late nineteenth century.

The Ryotwari settlement did not bring into existence a system of peasant ownership. The peasant soon discovered that the large number of zamindars had been replaced by one giant zamindars— the state—and that they were mere government tenants whose land was sold if failed to punctually pay land revenue. The Ryot’s rights of ownership of his land were also negated by three other factors. (1) in most areas the land revenue fixed was exorbitant; the Ryot was hardly left with bare maintenance even in the best of seasons. For instance, in Madras, the government claim was fixed as high as 45 to 55 percent of gross production in the settlement. The situation was nearly as bad in Bombay.(2) the government retained the
right to enhance land revenue at will. (3) the Ryot had to pay revenue even when his produce was partially or wholly destroyed by drought or floods.

**THE MAHALWARI SYSTEM**

A modified version of the zamindari settlement, introduced in the Ganga valley, the north-west provinces, parts of central India, and the Punjab, was known as the Mahalwari system. The revenue settlement was to be made village by village or estate (mahal) by estate with landlords or heads of families who collectively claimed to be the landlords of the village or the estate. In the Punjab a modified Mahalwari system known as the village system was introduced. In Mahalwari areas also, the land revenue was periodically revised. Both the zamindari and the ryotwari systems departed fundamentally from the traditional land systems of the country. The British created a new form of private property in land in such a way that the benefit of the innovation did not go to the cultivators. All over the country, land was now made saleable, mortgageable, and alienable. This was done primarily to protect the government’s revenue. If land had not been made transferable or saleable the government would find it very difficult to realize revenue from a cultivator who had no savings or possessions out of which to pay it. Now he could borrow money on the security of this land and or even sell part of it and pay his land revenue. If he refused to do so; the government could and often did auction his land realize the amount. Another reason for introducing private ownership of land was provided by the belief that only right of ownership would make the landlord or the Ryot exert himself in making improvements.

The British by making land a commodity which could be freely bought and sold introduced a fundamentals change in the existing land systems of the country. The stability and the
continuity of the Indian villages were shaken. In fact, the entire structure of rural society began to break up.

**Reading list:**

- Sekar Bandhopadhyay, *From Plassey to Partition*, Orient Longman PVTLTD, Delhi.
CHAPTER III
THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF BRITISH RULE

The British conquest had a pronounced and profound economic impact on India. There was hardly any aspect of the Indian economy that was not changed for better or for worse during the entire period of British rule down to 1947. Disruption of the traditional economy: the economic policies followed by the British led to the rapid transformation of India’s economy into a colonial economy whose nature and structure were determined by the needs of the British conquest of India differed from all previous foreign conquests. The peasant, the artisan and the trader had continued to lead to the same type of existence as before. The basic economic pattern, that of the self-sufficient rural economy, had been perpetuated. British conquerors totally disrupted the traditional structure of the Indian economy. They always remained foreigners in the land, exploiting Indian resources and carrying away India’s wealth as tribute. The result of this subordination of the Indian economy to the interest of British trade and industry were many and varied.

Ruin of artisans and craftsmen:

According to Bipan Chandra, there was a sudden and quick collapse of the urban handicrafts industry which had for centuries made India’s name a byword in the Marxist of the entire civilized word. This collapse was caused largely by competition with the cheaper imported machine made goods from Britain. The British imposed a policy of one-way free trade on India after 1813 and the invasion of British manufactures, in particular cotton textiles, immediately followed. Indian goods made with primitive techniques could not compete with goods produced on a mass scale by
powerful steam-operated machines. The ruin of Indian industries, particularly rural artisan industries, proceeded even more rapidly once the railways were built. The railway enabled British manufactures to reach and uproot the traditional industries in the remotest villages of the country. The cotton weaving and spinning industries were the worst hit. Silk and woollen textiles fared no better and a similar fate over took the iron, pottery, glass, paper, metals, guns, shipping, oil pressing, tanning and dyeing industries.

Apart from the influx of foreign goods, some other factors arising from British conquest also contributed to the ruin of Indian industries. The oppression practiced by the East India company and its servants on the craftsmen of Bengal during the second half of the eighteenth century, forcing them to sell their goods below the market price and to hire their services below the prevailing wage, compelled a large number of them to abandon their ancestral professions. In the normal course, Indian handicrafts would have benefited from the encouragement given by the company to their exploit, but this oppression had an opposite effect. The ruin of Indian handicrafts was reflected in the ruin of the towns and cities which were famous for their manufacture. Cities which had withstood the ravages of war and plunder failed to survive British conquest. Dhaka, Surat, Murshidabad and many other popular and flourishing industrial centers were depopulated and laid waste. According to Bipan Chandra, the tragedy was heightened by the fact that the decay of the traditional industries as was not accompanied by the growth of modern machine industries as was the case in Britain and western Europe consequently, the ruined handicraftsmen and artisans failed to find alternative employment. The only choice open to them was to crowd into agriculture. Moreover, the British rule also upset the balance of economic life in the villages. The gradual destruction of rural crafts broke up the union between
agriculture and domestic industry in the countryside and thus contributed to the destruction of the self-sufficient rural economy. Thus British conquest led to the de-industrialization of the country and increased dependence of the people on agriculture. Based on census reports, between 1901 and 1941 alone the percentage of population dependent on agriculture increased from 63.7 percentage to 70 percent. This increasing pressure on agriculture was one of the major cause of the extreme poverty in India under British rule. The decay of the Indian trade and industry was more or less complete by the middle of the nineteenth century. The cause of the decay may be summarized as (i) policy of the British parliament. (ii) competition of cheaper machine-made goods, (iii) lack of intention of the English government in India to protect or encourage Indian arts and crafts, (iv) oppression of the Indian manufacturers, particularly the weavers by the company’s servants.

Impoverishment of the peasantry:

The peasant was also progressively impoverished under British rule. Although he was now free from internal wars, his material condition deteriorated and he steadily sank into poverty. The condition of the cultivators in the Ryotwari and Mahalwari areas was no better. Here the government took the place of the zamindars and levied excessive land revenue which was in the beginning fixed as high as one-third to one-half of the produce. Heavy assessment of land was one of the main cause of the growth of poverty and the deterioration of agriculture in the nineteenth century. The process of transfer of land from cultivators was intensified during periods of scarcity and famines. The Indian peasant hardly had any savings for critical times and whenever crops failed the fell back upon the moneylender not only to pay land revenue but also to feed himself and his family. By the end of the nineteenth century, the money lender had become a major curse of the country side.
and an important cause of the growing poverty of the rural people. The pressure of taxation and growing poverty pushed the cultivators into debt, which in turn increased their poverty.

The growing commercialization of the agriculture also helped the money lender-cum-merchant to exploit the cultivator. The poor peasant was forced to sell his produce just after the harvest and at whatever price he could get as he had to meet in time the demands of the government, the landlord and the money lender. This placed him at the mercy of the grain merchant, who was in a position to dictate terms and who purchased his produce at much less than the market price. Thus a large share of the benefit of the growing trade in agricultural products was reaped by the merchant, who was very often also the village money lender.

The loss and overcrowding of land caused by de-industrialization and lack of modern industry compelled the landless peasants and ruined artisans and handicraftsmen to become other either tenants of the money lenders and zamindars by paying rack-rent or agricultural labourers at starvation wages. Thus the peasantry was crushed under the triple burden of the government, the zamindar or landlord and the money lender. After these three had taken their share not much was left for the cultivator and his family to subsist on. It has been calculated that in 1950-51 land rent and money lender’s interest amounted to Rs. 1400 crore or roughly equal to one-third of the total agricultural produce for the year. The result was that the impoverishment of the peasantry continued along with an increase in the incidence of famines. People died in millions whenever droughts or floods caused failure of crops and scarcity.

**Ruin of old Zamindars and Rise of New Landlordism:**

The first few decades of British rule witnessed the ruin of most of the old zamindars in Bengal and Madras. The
permanent settlement of 1793 also had a similar effect in the beginning. The heaviness of land revenue- the government claimed ten elevenths of the rental- and the rigid law collection, under which the zamindari estates were ruthlessly sold in case of delay in payment of revenue, worked havoc for the first few years. Many of the great zamindars of Bengal were utterly ruined and were forced to sell their zamindari rights. The permanent settlement in north madras and the temporary zamindari settlement in Uttar Pradesh were equally harsh on the local zamindars. But the condition of the zamindars soon improved radically. In order to enable the zamindars to pay the land revenue in time, the authorities increased their power over the tenants by extinguishing the traditional rights of the tenants. In the Ryotwari areas too the System of landlord-tenant relations spread gradually. A remarkable feature of the spread of landlordism was the growth of sub-in-feudation or intermediaries. An extremely harmful consequence of the rise and growth of zamindars and landlords was the political role they played during India’s struggle for independence.

Stagnation and deterioration of agriculture:

As a result of overcrowding in agriculture, excessive land revenue demand, growth of landlordism, increasing indebtedness and the growing impoverishment of cultivators, Indian agriculture began to stagnate and even deteriorate resulting in extremely low yields per acre.

The overcrowding in agriculture and increase in subinfeudation led to sub division and fragmentation of land into small holdings most of which could not maintain their cultivators. The extreme most of which could not maintain their cultivators. The extreme poverty of the overwhelming majority of peasants left them without any resources with which to improve agriculture by using better cattle and seeds,
more manure and fertilizers, and improved techniques of production. The government could have helped in improving and modernizing agriculture. But the government refused to recognize any such responsibility. A characteristic of the financial system of British India was that, while the main Burdon of taxation fell on shoulders of the peasant, the government spent only a small part of it on him. According to Bipan Chandra, at a time when agriculture all over the world was being modernized and revolutionized, Indian agriculture was technologically stagnating; hardly any modern machinery was used.

The overall impact upon the agrarian society of different parts of India was greater impoverishment due to high assessment, lack of opportunity to accumulation of wealth and stifling of initiative for any improvement of agriculture. Agriculture remained back ward, the cultivators became poorer, landless laborers increased with the progress of time, absentee land lordism drained out whatever wealth was produced in rural areas into towns, leaving the agricultural society bogged in a miserable existence.

Development of Modern Industries:

An important development in the second half of the nineteenth century was the establishment of large-scale machine-based industries in India. The machine age in India began when cotton textiles, jute and coal-mining industries were started in the 1850s. The first textile mill was started in Bombay by Cowasjee Nanabboy in 1853, and the first jute mill in Rishra(Bengal) in 1853. These industries expanded slowly but continuously. In 1879 there were 56 cotton textile mills in India employing nearly 43000 persons. Most of the modern Indian industries were owned or controlled by British capital foreign capitalists were attracted to Indian industry by the prospect of high profit. Labour was extremely cheap; raw
materials were readily and cheaply available; and for many goods, India and its neighbors provided a ready market. Foreign capital easily overwhelmed Indian capital in many of the industries. Only in the cotton textile industry did Indians have a large share from the beginning, and in the 1930s, the sugar industry was developed by Indians.

Another serious weakness of Indian industrial efforts was the almost complete absence of heavy or capital goods industries, without which there can be no rapid and independent development of industries. Apart from machine-based industries, the nineteenth century also witnessed the growth of plantation industries such as indigo, tea, and coffee. They were almost exclusively European in ownership. Indigo was used as a dye in textile manufacture. Indigo manufacture was introduced into India at the end of the eighteenth century and flourished in Bengal and Bihar. Indigo planters gained notoriety for their oppression over the peasants who were compelled by them to cultivate indigo. This oppression was vividly portrayed by the famous Bengali writer Dinbandhu Mitra in his play Neel Darpan in 1860. The invention of a synthetic dye gave a big blow to the indigo industry and it gradually declined.

According to Bipan Chandra, on the whole, industrial progress in India was exceedingly slow and painful. It was mostly confined to cotton and jute industries and tea plantations in the nineteenth century, and to sugar and cement in the 1930’s. As late as 1946, cotton and jute textiles accounted for 40 percent of all workers employed in factories. In terms of production as well as employment, the modern industrial development of India was paltry compared with the economic needs. He added that, moreover, even the modern industries had develop without government help and often in opposition to British policy. British manufacturers looked upon Indian textile and other industries as their rivals and put
pressure on the government of India not to encourage but rather to actively discourage industrial development in India. Thus British policy artificially restricted and slowed down the growth of Indian industries in the 1920s and 1930s under the pressure of the rising nationalist movement and the Indian capitalist class, the government of India was forced to grant some tariff protection to Indian industries.

An important social consequence of even the limited industrial development of the country was the birth and growth of two new social classes in Indian society - the industrial capitalist class and the modern working class. These two classes were entirely new in Indian history because modern mines, industries and means of transport were new. Even though these classes formed a very small part of the Indian population, they represented new technology, a new system of economic organization, new social relations, new ideas and new outlook.

DE-INDUSTRISALIZATION

De industrialisation is a process in which the industrial activity in a country or a region is reduced because of major economic or social change. It is the process of destruction of Indian handicraft industries by competition from the products of British manufacture during the nineteenth century. India’s traditional village economy was characterized by the ‘blending of the village economy had been systematically slaughtered by the British government. In the process, the traditional handicraft industries slipped away, from its pre-eminence and its decline started at the turn of the 18th century and proceeded rapidly almost to the beginning of the 19th century. Indian writers address the exploitative features of British rule as the cause of 19th century decay. But the western scholars didn’t accept the exploitation thesis and they put forward their
theories, Morris D Morris such western scholars, he was severely criticized by Indian scholars.

In England, however, the suffering caused by the decline of handicrafts was counter balanced fairly soon by the much greater employment and income-generating effect of factory industries in Indian colonial case, the artisans were made to shoulder the burden of progress being achieved in country six thousand miles away, since the growth of Indian factories was non-existent before the 1850s and 1860s and painfully slow even afterwards. It was left to a recent U.S scholar, Morris D Morris, however, to argue that deindustrialization itself was a myth. Precise statistical proof of the decline of handicraft is admittedly difficult find, both for the pre-census period and even afterwards, as the 1881-1931 census series, often quoted by nationalist, was shown by Daniel Thorner to be based on a confusion of categories and therefore not a clear indicator of a decline in the proportion of population dependent on industries. Nationalist relied heavily on statistics of external trade indicating a collapse in traditional Indian textile exports, and a rapid increase in Lancashire imports, but these do not constitute a definite proof of decline in aggregate uniform and cataclysmic process assumed in popular nationalist literature. One must distinguish between types of artisan products, regions and varying time-periods. Urban luxury manufactures like the high quality silks and cottons of Dacca or Murshidabad must have been hit first, by the almost simultaneous collapse of indigenous court demand and the external market on which these had largely depended. Village crafts in the interior, and particularly, in regions other than eastern India where British penetration was earliest and deepest, probably survived much longer, coming to be seriously affected only with the spread of railways.

Yet the arguments of Morris seeking to refute the whole theory of deindustrialization are in fact more conjectural.
and dubious then those usually offered by the much-abused nationalists. Indigenous textile production, Morris argues, could have remained constant or even increased despite the big rise in imports from Lancashire, because of an allegedly massive upswing in Indian demand sufficient to cover both but no data at all is given to prove this upswing. The argument that indigenous weavers benefited from the lower price of imported yarn ignores both the ruin of Indian spinners as well as the problems caused by the fall in the price of woven goods, due to cost-reducing technological innovations in England but not in India. Lancashire manufacturers benefited from coast reductions in both spinning and weaving. Indian weavers gained from the use of cheaper imported yarn, but there was no decline in weaving costs, and yet they had to complete with the lower prices of imported cloth—and so, as Toru Matsui pointed out in his very effective rejoinder to Morris, their conditions could hardly have improved.

According to Sumit Sarkar, deindustrialization was assumed to have been a fact, and a lot of scattered data was given about it, in a large number of unimpeachable official sources like census and famine reports and regional industrial surveys. Surveys of Bengal manufactures by Collin in 1890 and Cummings in 1908. He added that the sufferings of artisans have to be kept in mind as a significant factor in the understanding of many movements of our period, both in the way in which deindustrialization stimulated patriotic sentiments among intellectuals alike in the moderate; extremist and Gandhian eras, as well as more directly, in occasional urban and rural explosions of various types.

However, some modern economic historians have questioned this nationalist thesis. They argue, first of all, that the rate of deindustrialization, if it did occur at all, is difficult to quantify, because of the paucity of reliable data and also multiple occupations of the Indian artisans, many of whom
were often involved in agriculture as well some other recent researches, however, reveal that the nationalist position might not have been so incorrect after all, as the available statistical data from Gangetic Bihar clearly show that the proportion of industrial population to total population of that region declined from 18.6 percent in 1809-13 to 8.5 percent in 1901. Greater fall was in the percentage of weavers and spinners, whose proportion to the total industrial population declined drastically from 62.3 to 5.1 percent during the same period.

That does not bring the ‘deindustrialization’ debate to a convenient conclusion, for it has been shown further that while employment declined, real income per worker in industry increased between 1900 and 1947 and this did not indicate overall regress in the industrial situation. This rising industrial income was not certainly due to the intervention of modern industries in India, but, as, Tirthankar Roy has argued, because of increasing per worker productivity in the crafts. This was achieved through technological specialization and industrial re-organization, such as substitution of family labour with wage labour within the small –scale industry, which was mostly the case in the handloom textile sector. As Roy further suggests, there is also evidence of ‘a significant rise in labour productivity’ in other small- scale industries as well, resulting from a process which he describes as ‘commercialization’. One of the reasons behind this lack of overall economic development was that the colonial state in the colonial state in the nineteenth century was far from just a “night watchman”, as supposed by Morris D Morris.

Morris D. Morris was a professor of university of Washington inaugurated the industrialization debate by publishing his article entitled “Towards a Re Interpretation of 19th Century Indian Economic History” in the march 1968 volume of Indian economic and social history review. Morris opined that the ‘traditional India’, a subsistence economy
which was self contained and static. He also argued that Indian society has been based historically on a non-animal powered agriculture. Agriculture in India seems always to have been characterized by very low yields. Rotation, falling, green manuring and double cropping were known. Extremes of temperature, very short growing seasons, and the restricted supply of soil moisture made it impossible to achieve high yields.

Morris D Morris argued that the British rule introduced the political framework of the nineteenth century liberal nation state. Public order was established on a scale over before never achieved in India. Taxation and commercial regulations were largely eliminated. A high degree of stability, standardization and efficiency was achieved in administration. It stimulated economic activity. Morris’s tentative conclusion is that, at worst, the vast expansion of British exports to India slammed off the expanding demand. The handloom weavers were at least no fewer in number and no worse off economically at the end of the period than at the beginning. The net effect for the economy was a positive one in terms of per capita income. According to Morris, the late nineteenth century also was the rigid growth of modern factories for the production of cotton and jute fabrics, the development of a great railway network, and the expansion of the coal mining industry to support these. There was also remarkable expansion of commercial activity, both domestic and foreign. The growth of cities as centers of demand, on a scale not achieved previously, stimulated domestic commerce. In addition, he argued, there was a growing international market for traditional primary products as well as the creation of trade in new products such as tea. He also argued that we have a fairly solid basis for arguing that per capita real product rose significantly during this period. He conclude his paper on de industrialization in India with some notes of warning about
this analysis. First, this discussion is based on assumption of stagnation during the inter war period. It is entirely possible that the crude estimates of output trends which are currently available has led as astray. We tend to ignore the geography of the problem, the size and resources of the region within which the process has to occur. Therefore, Morris argued that, if we keep these features in mind, we may see the nineteenth century as a period too brief to achieve all the structural changes needed to provide the pre conditions of an industrial revolution.

Bipan Chandra began by interrogating the word ‘re-interpretation’ in the title of Morris’s initial paper and argued that “Morris is not presenting a new interpretation of nineteenth century economic history but only re articulating with a bit more of modern economic terminology… the nineteenth century imperialist approach which underlies most of British official and unofficial writing of the time. Bipan Chandra, Toru Matsui and Tapan Roy Chaudhari have argued in response to Morris, that evidence point towards deindustrialization. Going by reports of famines, eye witnesses and traveler’s accounts, official enquires and government reports of the British east India company etc. were all pointers towards the worse possible impact of British manufactured goods in India. These thinkers said that there was not enough evidence for showing the growth in per capita income, in fact all evidence was on the contrary, demonstrating that per capita income was falling down because indigenous spinning, that fed the hand looms had suffered. Bipan Chandra made two important points: first that the stagnation itself was structural and it was a structure in which British imperialism was directly implicated. He noted: “more over… this increase in agricultural production was a reflection of the British desire to make India an agrarian hinterland of Britan so that India could… supply its raw materials and food needs as well as act
as a market for industrial products and capital. After all it is no purl of imperialist economic interests to produce all round stagnation. Though that might be the indirect consequence of their policies.

The second was that it is under British colonialism that the land–human ratio significantly worsened and that the deindustrialization that the Indian economy witnessed during the 19th century had important role to play in that worsening. Toro Matsui was considered one of the historian who was part of the deindustrialization debate. His argument was can analyze. Toro Matsui who was critically approached to Morris. Against the view of Morris can lends that during the 19th century there was substantial increase in total real output and a significant rose in per capita real product and that it is wrong to maintain. that the British took over a society that ‘was ripe’ per an industrial revolution and then frustrated to development. According to Tapan Rey Chaudhuri that the India had a political unity and economic stability.

FAMINES:

The entire period of British rule in India was marked by recurrent famines and epidemics. The impact was exceptionally intense on the masses of population already famished and enfeebled by undernourishment and malnourishment. Famines were not unknown in pre-British India but their nature had undergone considerable change. Famines had become a recurrent phenomena during the colonial rule and their frequency seems to have I creased. The increasing frequency and intensity of famines in India under colonial rule attracted the attention of many eminent contemporaries. Historically speaking, the nature and pattern of famines was same everywhere and their essential features were more or less similar. The famines were often local phenomena confined to small geographical boundaries. The
beginning of industrial revolution and emergence of capitalism required primitive accumulation of capital which was made possible by colonial plunder, drain of wealth, slave trade and monopoly profit in international trade. The process of accumulation of wealth in the modern west was dependent upon impoverishment, destitution, devastation, and decimation of the people of colonial societies. The immediate cause of famines was invariably drought or unseasonal ruins. There is not much disagreement on this point. Even nationalists like R.C Dutt have accepted this. The cultivator who lived under British rule became a permanently famine stricken man. The British land revenue system was rigid and inflexible in nature. It was fixed on good and bad years alike. The colonial government was not prepared for the famine and displayed a lack of urgency in the beginning period of the famine. When the government understood finally what was required, there was no holding back, but by that time it was too late. With the onset of the famine instructions were given by the government that ‘no interference was to be permitted with prices of food grains’. The British government abandoned pre-colonial policies to compact natural calamities and food scarcity in India. It seems they tried to deal with ‘non-interference’ in the market and refused to take measures to increase supply and also to control the food grain prices during the famines. They were more interested in the implementation of non-interference in the market.

A major characteristic of British rule in India and the net result of British economic policies, was the prevalence of extreme poverty among its people. While historians disagree on the question whether India was getting poorer not under British rule, there is no disagreement on the fact that throughout the period of British rule most Indians always lived on the verge of starvation. As time passed, they found it more and more difficult to find employment or make a living. British
economic exploitation, the decay of indigenous industries, the failure of modern industries to replace them, high taxation, the drain of wealth to Britain and a backward agrarian structure leading to the stagnation of agriculture and the exploitation of the poor peasants by the zamindars, landlords, princes, money lenders, merchants and the state gradually reduced the Indian people to extreme poverty and prevented them from progressing India’s colonial economy stagnated at a low economic level.

The poverty of the people found its culmination in a series of famines which ravaged all parts of India in the second half of the nineteenth century. The first of these famines occurred in western Uttar Pradesh in 1860-61 and coast over 2 lakhs of lives. In 1865-66 a famine engulfed Orissa, Bengal, Bihar, and Madras and took a toll of nearly 20 lakhs of lives, Orissa alone losing 10 lakh people. More than 14 lakhs of persons died in the famine of 1868-70 in western Uttar Pradesh, Bombay and Punjab.

Perhaps the worst famine in Indian history till then occurred in 1876-78 in Madras, Mysore, Hyderabad, Maharashtra, western Uttar Pradesh, and Punjab. The famine of 1899-1900 followed quickly and caused widespread distress. In spite of official efforts to save lives through provision of famine relief, over 25 lakhs of people died. Apart from these major famines, many other local famines and scarcities occurred. William Digby, a British writer, has calculated that, in all, over 28,325,000 people died during famines from 1854 to 1901. Another famine in 1943 carried away nearly three million people in Bengal. These famines and the high losses of life caused by them indicate the extent to which poverty and starvation had taken root in India.

Many English officials in India recognized the grim reality of India’s poverty during the nineteenth century. India’s
economic backwardness and poverty were not due to the niggardliness of nature. They were man-made. The natural resources of India were abundant and capable of yielding, if properly utilized, a high degree of prosperity to the people. The poverty of India was not a product of its geography or of the lack of natural resources or of some ‘inherent’ defect in the character and capabilities of the people.

According to Bipan Chandra, the basic fact is that the same social, political, and economic processes that produced industrial development and social and cultural progress in Britain also produced and then maintained economic underdevelopment and social and cultural backwardness in India. The reason for this is obvious. Britain subordinated the Indian economy to its own economy and determined the basic social trends in India according to her own needs. The result was stagnation of India’s agriculture and industries, exploitation of its peasants and workers by the zamindars, land lords, princes, money lenders, merchants, capitalists and the foreign government and its officials, and the spread of poverty, disease and semi-starvation.

Lord Lytton arrived as the British viceroy in 1876 and in the same year a famine broke in India which claimed the lives of nearly 10 million people. In the initial stages in raged over most of the parts of south India like madras, Bombay, Hyderabad and Mysore and then it struck parts of central India and Punjab. Famine was a recurring feature of the life in India,. Which reached its numerically dead list peak in the late 18th century, in the early stages of colonialism. These famines were bad enough to have a remarkable impact on the long term population growth of the country. It is reported that altogether twenty four famines had occurred during the second half of the 19th century, taking away the lives of more than thirty million people.
The famines in colonial India were the product of both uneven rainfall and economic and administrative policies of the British government, like rack renting, levies for war efforts, free trade policies, expansion of export of agricultural products and neglect of agricultural investment. Export crops displaced millions of acres of land that could have been used for growing crops for domestic subsistence. It has been argued that famines in British India were not caused by the lack of food in particular geographical area instead, because on inadequate transportation of food, which in turn was due to the absence of a political and social structure.

The large scale loss of human life, due to a series of famines between 1860 and 1877 became the cause of the political controversy and discussion in India and England, which finally led to the formation of the Indian famine commission in 1880 by the then viceroy, lord Lytton. Though by the viceroy was not in favor of appointing the famine commission in the beginning, he had to succumb to the growing demands. The famine commission was formed under Richard Strachey to enquire into the causes of famines and to recommend relief measures to be adopted by the government to mitigate the sufferings of the people. The commission submitted its report in the same year itself and on the basis of the report, a famine code was prepared, which laid down certain regulations relating to famine measures to be adopted in future.

The famine commission of 1880 concluded that famines occurred in the country mainly due to unusual drought because of the failure of the customary rainfall, leading to the failure of food crops on which the subsistence of the population depended. In fact the famine commission report relieved the government from any responsibility for the horrific mortality. It was asserted that cheaper famine labor could be fruitfully used in modernized projects such as
railways road construction, masonry works etc. the report further held that the casualty was caused by natural phenomenon and that human agencies have no control over it. All the British viceroys in India; especially Lytton and Ripon believed to the doctrine that it was the climate and failure of rain that caused failure of crops which paved way for the outbreak of famine.

Adomsmith’s laissez-faire approach, i.e. the principle of non-intervention, was firmly laid down as a part of state policy and therefore was strictly implemented in all subsequent famines. It was said that in the past during the natural calamities, the previous rulers undertook harsh measures to persecute traders and fixed maximum selling prices for food grains. Thoman Malthus, who argued famines were a natural measure through which populations are ultimately capable of maintaining a balance between population and natural resources. According to him, large numbers of deaths were the last result for a population that had exceeded its resource base. Dadabhai Naoroji thoroughly exposed the British colonial policy of exploitation, leading to the misery of Indian people. According to R C. Dutt, the heavy enhancement of revenue, particularly in the Royatwari areas, was the main reason for the extreme poverty and lack of power among the cultivators to withstand the vicissitudes of the seasons of India. Dutt criticized the colonial government for high land revenue charges. Amartya sen presented an economic perspective on famines and his key concept was individuals entitlement, which is defined as all the commodity bundles that can be obtained from the resources at her/his command. According to him, starvation and lack of food availability arises from “entitlement failure”. This failure could be due to a loss of endowments or a change, such as through production and trade in which endowment are transferred into entitlements.
COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

The theme of ‘commercialization’, which has been such a favourite among agrarian historians of colonial India, must be recognized as simultaneously an economic and political process. Ever since the 1820s colonial and post-colonial states as much as peasants and agricultural labourers have been susceptible to the rhythms and fluctuation of wider economic trends. A number of contending perspectives have differed in pointing to the primary locus of historical initiative behind the process of commercialization of agriculture in colonial India. An early view emphasized the key link between the colonial systems of land revenue and increased agricultural production for the markets. One of the most recent interventions in this debate has located the transition to colonial capitalism. Even later between 1840 and 1880- when expanded production of commodities in rural India was geared emphatically for a capitalist world market. While recognizing the importance of agrarian commerce in pre-colonial regional economies, it is important not to lose sight of the colonial state as a key factor in bringing about major shifts in the scale and character of commodity production. The sectors and degrees of intervention in agrarian economy and society varied considerably. The discontinuities between market economy and capitalism were sharp and serious.

Types and phases of commercialization: first there is kind of commercialization closely associated with increased accumulation, giving rise to expansion of productive scale based on managerial farming or plantation agriculture. The second major type has been dubbed ‘subsistence commercialization’, where poor peasants driven by their concerns of securing basic subsistence in a context of demographic and social pressures turned to the cultivation of high –value and labour intensive cash-crops in an attempt to eke out a larger gross income from their diminishing small
holdings. A third major form has been labeled ‘dependent commercialization’, characterized by intrusive foreign merchant capital which brings the agricultural production process firmly under its sway but stops short of capitalist accumulation and consolidation of land. The common usage of the phase ‘indigo plantation’ with its capitalistic connotations notwithstanding, production of indigo in west Bengal in the first half of the nineteenth century comes closest to this style of agricultural commercialization. On a long historical view, two types of agricultural commercialization have been most pervasive in moulding the productive activities of the working peasantry of eastern India. These were dependent commercialization of the late eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, during which indigo was the leading commodity, and subsistence commercialization of the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries, during which jute was the leading commodity.

Commercialization of agriculture became widespread in India by the middle of the 19th century, along with the consolidation of British colonialism. Though crops such as cotton, tobacco and sugar cane were grown in the pre-British period, it was not so extensive and significant like that in the British period. The colonial authorities introduced basic changes in the land revenue policy and land was made private property. As the primary motive of colonialism in India was to make maximum extraction of wealth in any form, the authorities provided all sort of encouragement to the growing of crops for the market rather than to consumption ends of the people. Thus agriculture in the country began to become a business enterprise by the middle of the 19th century. Thus certain specialized crops were grown, not for consumption in villages but for national and international markets.

Commercial crops like cotton, jute, ground nut, oil seeds, sugar cane, tobacco etc. were more remunerable than
food grains. Cultivation of spices, fruits and vegetables also made a wide spread commercial transaction. However, the highest level of commercialization reached in the plantation industry like tea, coffee, rubber etc. these plantation products were produced seeking for wider market. Agriculture as a medium of transaction was not a sudden outcome; rather certain objective factors were responsible for it. The spread of money economy, replacement of custom and tradition by competition and contract, development of internal and external trade, emergence of a unified national markets etc. were the contributing factors for commercialization and specialization. However, commercialization for the Indian peasants come as a forced process by the needs of colonialism with the introduction of new land revenue policy, the colonial authorities began to extract high rate of land revenue from the farmers, often stretching from one –third to half of the net produce. No concession at the time of national calamities, especially intermittent droughts. So the peasant were forced to take loans form the money lenders. The high rate of interest to be paid to the money –lenders forced the peasants to turn over to growing cash crops. The cultivators had to rush a part of their produce into the market at the time of harvest and sell it for the prices fixed by the traders. The food grains thus sold in the market for cheaper price at the time of harvest were to be bought back by the same cultivators at a high price during the non- harvesting times. Prices of all crops were always in fluctuation.

Commercialization of agriculture did not increase the production level in the country, rather brought economic disruption. The sole aim of the British was to convert India and preserve it as an agricultural farm providing raw materials to industrialize Britain. These were several other factors that had contributed for the rapid commercialization of agriculture. In India, the second half of the 19th century witnessed growth of
railway in the country and this helped for commercialization of agriculture. The length of railway tracks increased from 288 miles in 1857 to 30576 miles in 1908. The opening of the Suez canal in 1869 shortened the sea route between England and India by about three thousand miles and brought the two countries more closer than before, which naturally helped the growth of trade. The technological innovations took place in England during the period replacing sailing vessels with modern steam ships which paved way for bringing down the freight charges by half and it had simultaneous effect on the export of agricultural products from India.

The civil war in USA diverted the British demand for raw cotton from that country of India. Consequently there was sudden increase in the Indian export of cotton to England after 1862. This paved way for a phenomenal increase in the export of agricultural goods from India. It is reported that the total value of export from India went up by more than five hundred percent from 1859-60 to 1906-07. The most important impact of the commercialization of agriculture in India during those days was the scarcity of food. The high demand for the commercial crops in place of food grains, because of the higher rate of remuneration . food crops were replaced by cotton , indigo, jute etc. the cultivator were longing for more profit and so they turned to cash crops. The scarcity of food grains was one of the most important factors for the occurrence of disastrous famine in the country in the second half of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century. It is said that the cultivation of indigo in place of rice hastened the coming of famine. The benefit of commercialization of agriculture was enjoyed by a small number of the agriculturists. Majority of the cultivators suffered great losses as they had to now depend on the market for their own food requirement.

Commercialization of agriculture had its positive result also. As a result of the commercialization regional
specialization grew. Certain areas were specialized for cultivation of certain items. The closed economy of the village was replaced by its link with national and international markets. The farmers had the choice of cultivating different crops, either for his immediate needs or for the demand of the markets. However, in other countries commercialization of agriculture was accompanied by an increase in the cultivable land as well as in productive capacity. There commercial crops were added to the existing cultivated land and did not replace food crops. But due to the colonial policies, it was not the case in India. The cultivated land of food crops were transformed into land for cultivating commercial crops and this resulted in the reduction of the production of food crops, which ultimately led to scarcity of food grains and it in a way contribute for the occurrence of famines.

Commercialization of agriculture, which favors differentiation within the peasantry, capital accumulation and production for the markets, is considered to be a sign of progress towards capitalist agriculture. In the Indian case, however, the initiative often did not come from within the peasant society and the benefits did not accrue to them either. In the case of indigo in eastern India, it was directly fostered by the company’s government when in 1788 it offered advances to ten pioneer planters trying to grow indigo in lower Bengal by using west Indian methods. Since then indigo industry never functioned as a proper plantation economy as with no right to buy land until 1829, the planters had to persuade, and later force, the local peasants to accept advances to produce indigo in their lands. This created enough scope for friction, because demand remained uncertain, and it was with an eye on the needs of the remittance trade, rather than the requirements of English textile manufacturers, that the amount of production was monitored. The system became more exploitative and coercive day by day, leading to the indigo
rebellion in 1859-60. As for other crops, there is a persistent view that the peasants were “forced” to cultivate cash crops because of high revenue demand, the necessity to pay revenue and rent in cash and above all for debt servicing. This view is refuted by the fact that there was always a positive correlation between the price of a crop and the cropped acreage, indicating profit motive behind the peasants decision for preferring a particular cropping pattern. But at the same time it was only the rich peasants who could go for cash crops and they too remained immensely vulnerable to the fluctuations in the market. In western India, for example, cotton cultivation grew in response to the cotton boom in the 1860s caused by the American civil war. It created a pocket of prosperity in the Deccan cotton belt, which disappeared very after the end of the war and was followed by a famine and agrarian riots in the 1870s.

IMPACT OF COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

Tirthankar Roy has argued that: “it is possible that the capitalists captured most or all of the increase in value-added. The rich have become richer. But that does not mean that the poor got poorer. For, total income had increased. One could argue however that if the rich got richer and the poor remained poor or became just marginally better off, that was not a very happy state of development either. In other words, commercialization of agriculture did not benefit the majority of the peasants, although it would be hasty to conclude that it signified a “transition” from pre-capitalist to capitalist mode of production marked by the rise of a powerful rural capitalist class and the proletarianisation of the peasantry. Railways are considered to be another contribution of British rule towards the development of modern economic infrastructure “India became”, writes a modern historian,” a nation with its local centers linked by rail to each other and to the world”.
The precise pattern of commercialization naturally varied from crop to crop. Thus tea, an innovation in a region with little population pressure, required plantations directly managed by whites system which came very close to slavery. Indigo in central Bengal was mainly cultivated by peasants themselves, but only through considerable coercion by very unpopular sahib planters forcing their advances on the raiyats, for profits were low and uncertain and the crop upset the harvest cycle. No direct coercion however, was needed for jute in east Bengal, which was more profitable than rice. But despite such variations, certain common features stand out. As for the vast majority of poorer peasants, commercialization was often a forced process, as money was needed to meet the growing Burdon of revenues and rents in cash. The changeover to commercial crops and higher-priced food grains like wheat due to revenue and rent pressure meant a shift away from poor men’s food crops like jowar, bajra or pulses, which often caused disaster in famine years growing. Dependence on money lenders was another in evitable consequence, as commercial crops usually required higher inputs and therefore more advances. Thus commercialization did contribute to differentiation within the peasantry, but hardly to real growth. One is tempted to apply to colonial India. Clifford Geertz’s comment on what he has called ‘agricultural involution’ in Dutch-ruled java: the point is not that so many peasants suffered, but that they suffered for nothing.

The specific results of commercialization are obviously bound up with the structure of land relations established or consolidated by British revenue and tenancy policies. British agrarian policies were molded basically by a combination of greed for more revenue and desires to encourage certain types of agricultural production for export; while the need to win or retain political allies administrative convenience, and changing ideological assumptions also played a certain role at times.
for peasants in the areas of the permanent settlement, British policies after the 1850s did occasionally by to administer into existence a class of enterprising raiyats on the model of English yeomen farmers.

The ultimate pattern in the raiyatwari areas turned out to be not too dissimilar. Despite the theory of direct settlement with cultivators, the madras raiyat become often, in dharma kumar’s words, ’in effect a landlord who hired his land out particularly after 1850s as the Burdon of over assessment was gradually somewhat reduced. Raiyatwari tenants became a growing category whose woes were enhanced by the fact were unknown to and therefore unprotected by the law.

In no other period of Indian history, Daniel Thorner has pointed out, ‘can we find so large, so well-established, and so secure a group of wealthy land holders as that which grew up and flourished between the 1790s and the 1940s’. zamindars and rich peasants often became considerably involved with the process of commercialization, but what renamed largely absent was any structural need to invest indirect agricultural production. Sub letting of land, usury and trade were much more secure and profitable than direct capitalist farming. Even where agricultural labourers were employed by large farmers, there was little incentive to technical innovation given the existence of a numerous rural proletariat rendered abjectly dependent by a combination of caste pressures and indebtedness. Not modernity, but a consolidation of semi-feudal relations, was therefore the hallmark of the colonial impact on our agrarian scene.

COMMERCIALISATION ON RURAL SOCIETY

In the nineteenth century once the company could secure a strong foothold in India the peasant economy came to be rapidly reorganized. Commercialization of agriculture and consolidation of networks between moneylenders and traders
became important features of the new arrangement. Rapid communalization emerged as the central and complex characteristic of the Indian agriculture. Peasant production of cash crops increased its impact on peasant society was enduring. Indian rural society underwent several tangible and intangible changes amidst crucial economic transformations during colonial rule. At the same time these changes could not displace some elementary structures of rural society. The subject of the transformation of Indian rural society under British colonial rule is a widely debated one. The debate has largely centered on the question of to what extent Indian rural traditions were restructured and re-defined under colonial rule. Strong views were expressed by a number of colonial administrators about the nature and possible impact of British rule in the Indian rural society. Influential administrators like Charles Metcafe and Henry Badon Powell considered Indian villages as little unchanging republic’. They primarily tried to understand the attachment of the rural Indian to land.

Baden Powell emphasized his predecessors’ views he also laid emphasis on the importance of individual property and land ownership within a village. Their ideas had a deep impact in formulation of colonial policies and such ideas survived for several decades. Charles Metcafe summed up his views by saying, “The village communities are little republics, having nearly everything they can want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relations. They seem to last where nothing else lasts”. For stokes, the first century of the British rule in India wrought no major societal transformation. At the same time, while for Frykenberg the British state remained essentially a Hindu raj’, on the other hand for Bernard Cohn, rural society was subject to structural change’. Such debates have highlighted that the village was also endowed with dynamics and mobilizing forces of their own. Many would argue that the villages under the
British rule regained new dynamism. Such examples are often cited from the experiences of that there was a dissolution under colonial rule, of many of these broader systems, which permitted the village community to establish itself as the nucleus of 19th century society. Colonial scholars, beginning with Sir Charles Metcafe and B.H Powell, explored the distinctive character of village tenures. Their primary emphasis was on northern India. They emphasized the notion that these communities formed little unchanging republics’. This static analysis of the character of the Indian villages came under close scrutiny.

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CHAPTER IV
WOMEN IN COLONIAL ERA

In colonial India, the social status of women seemed to be dependent on their men. They were denied the opportunity of education and refinement except a few women of the upper classes. They were unaware of their basic rights as individuals due to illiteracy, ignorance and economic subordinate through the age. Regulation XVII of the colonial government of 4 December 1820 declared the practice of sati, on burning of burying alive of widow illegal and punishable by criminal court as culpable homicide. Bentinck sought the help of ram Mohan Roy and asked him to publicize the good point of new act. Rajaram Mohen Roy popularized the act of 1829 and created a mighty public opinion in its favour through his writing and speeches. The effort of P T Ishwar Chandra vidya sagar (1820-91) dug up old Sanskrit reference and proved that vedic text sanctioned widow-re marriage. He sent a petition signed by 987 person to the government of India urging it for legislative action. His effort were rewarded when the Hindu-re marriage act (act XV of 1856) legalized marriage of widows, and declared issues from such marriage as legitimate. The Christian missionaries were the first to set up the Calcutta female juvenile society in 1819. P.T Vidya sagar established number of girl’s school in Bengal . Charles wood’s dispatch on education(1854) laid great stress on the need for female education.

Regulation XXI of 1775 and III of 1804 declared infanticide illegal and equivalent to committing a murder as a precautionary measure, the government of India passed an act in 1870 (pamphlet on the right of women , 1975). It making compulsory for parents to register the birth of all babies and providing for verification of female child for some years after
birth. In 1872, colonial government enacted the native marriage act II which was fixed the age of marriage for girls at 14 and for boys at 18. It also contained provision to ban polygamy, the progressive section of Indian intelligentsia welcomed the provision of this act. women’s property act III (1874), it provided for The Indian women, the right to possess and manage their own “handed property” and estate the guardians of their children. The women were authorized by this act, to acquire and manage their property. It was first time that the wages and earning of a married women were exclusively their own.

**COLONIAL ECONOMY AND WOMEN’S WORK:**

Growth of capitalist markets has always and everywhere spawned not only a relative or absolute impoverishment of women, colonies, workers, marginal groups and communities; but also a decrease in cultural and biological diversity. From the beginning a cross-class “male deal” mandated higher wages for men. Thus ensuring that women’s dependence on and service to men persisted as earlier patriarchal patterns crumbled and entirely new modes of production emerged. Economic growth has never been cost free, and its costs and benefits have always been savagely unequal. Women depend more than men on social transfer payments and public service such as transportation and they suffer unequally when these are reduced. Women in local communities around the world are challenging economic and religious fundamentalisms as they claim their freedom and affirm and protect life. They are resisting those who would steal their knowledge and seeds and transfer resources from subsistence production to production for profit. They are preserving social and public services, organizing labour in sweat shops, protecting the environment, opposing violence and war, confronting tyranny and defending and extending democracy. Women are not the only group or movement
criticizing not only economic growth as a measure of wealth and well being, but also colonialism and capitalism. Their historical and mandated responsibility for individual and communal life anchors their diverse global networks, their resistance to patriarchal corporate globalization and their visions of a life affirming future. The consensus emerging among the world’s feminists on these transformative perspectives was evident in practice in 1991 when 1500 women from 54 countries met in Miami at the world women’s congress for a healthy planet. Collections of feminist writing from Latin America and Asia (second Asian and Pacific ministerial conference on women) confirm that these worldwide feminist visions and perspectives are shared and are shaping women’s practice around the world.

**PROFESSIONAL POSITION OF WOMEN:**

Unlike male workers, women were not able to even consider relocating themselves along with the plant as that choice was not given to them by the employers or not supported by their household. Labour market flexibility strategies were used to control the number and wages of the workers. In both industries and amongst all firms, the strategy was a traditional one, i.e. by using the piece rate and daily wage systems to keep the wages under management control. Women will continue to be perceived as ‘contingent’ workers by employers as long as they are perceived as ‘contingent’ by their household members. Employers know that they cannot compete with households in claiming women’s labour and gender ideology. It is only when households reduce women’s domestic labour, give them equal access to education and skill and regard them as workers, that employers will be forced to revise their rationale, perception and the low status given to women workers.
Status of women in society is explained in terms of “role” which is assigned to them by tradition, religion, ideology and the state of economic development. The role of women has differed from society to society and from time to time. Within one society itself, it has changed over time. There were societies where performed important economic roles. In these societies women had complete, or at least major, control over the economic activity. Status and role are interlinked with the concepts of power and position. A role confers social, economic, political and cultural power on the individual. The status of women correlates with the social space occupied by them in a particular society at a particular time. There are five major aspects. Women’s labour, control over resources i.e., economic, health, education and political, sexuality (their physical integrity and freedom from all types of physical and mental violence), on their reproduction, mobility. Men gained the upper hand when the concepts of private property emerged. Men over threw power over the women in the household. According to Engel “the men seized the reins in the house also, the women was degraded, enthralled the slave of the man’s lust, a mere instrument for breeding children”. A number of scholars addressed the issue of male domination and low status of women as a historical phenomenon, grounded in a particular set of circumstances rather than flowing from some universal aspect of human nature of culture. Many of the Marxist and socialist feminists claim that it is necessary to examine history to find out how and why inequality between the sexes came out. The most important factor in the transition to a society with gender stratification was the development of a form of communal property to a group of kin who had exclusive rights over property. The position of women and gender inequalities vary from society to society in different pre-industrial societies and has altered in many ways after industrialization. We can understand women’s status through
the examination of their access and control over private assets 
and resources, access of public resources, control over their 
labour and income, control over their body – sexuality, 
reproduction and physical security, control over physical 
mobility, access to and control over political spaces, access to 
control over intangible resources- such as self – confidence, 
self –worth, communication skills, information, knowledge 
and skill, access to legal structure and redressal.

The shifting of the work setting from home to the 
factory after the industrial revolution has changed the concept 
of work drastically. Earlier the whole family worked as one 
production unit and pursued a craft which has socially ranked 
and integrated with the social structure. Thus the basis for 
identification was family occupation and not individual 
position in the skill hierarchy of the organization. The removal 
of work setting from home had an adverse affect on the 
position of women. Firstly ‘work’ had come to be identified as 
something which is pursued outside the home. Secondly, work 
had come to be identified with specific of the economic 
system. The work of women at home which produced only use 
value and which was not remunerated in tangible terms and 
which was tied to the day to day house hold chores had come 
to be regarded as non-work and participation of women is 
grossly under reported, more so in under developed countries 
with dual economies than in advanced western countries.

Along with the emergence of an organizational culture 
there is also change in the occupational hierarchy with some 
occupations attaining an identity of ‘professions’ – elite 
occupations. There are two point of view from which the 
relationship between women and professions could be 
perceived. One is the position of women is full fledged 
professions- medicines, law, academics etc. another is semi- 
professions –like nursing, teaching, secretarial work, and their 
 attempts at professionalization. Rose mary deem argues that in
the process of professionalization of semi-professions women are pushed further drown in the occupational hierarchy with a new group of professionals dominated by men and other privileged classes, emerging above them. Since the occupational hierarchy is a reflection of the social hierarchy. No drastic changes can be expected until there are far reaching changes in the society in its technological basis, value-orientations, power relations as well as division of responsibility at home. The fact that women are entering elite occupations in no cause for complacency until we realize and make conscious attempts to remove the inherent prejudices as well as the hindering social-structural imbalances.

According to Tanika Sarkar, the woman was, more ever required to provide heavy unpaid and often unacknowledged labour at home. However, the power and powerless of women made up a changing cycle, depending on the status of her husband, her possession of sons, her fertility, looks, health and capacity for domestic labour. The middle-aged mother of grown-up sons could be a powerful matriarch and elderly mothers-in-laws could command and oppress young wives. The women would get more security stitched into the fabric of lineage, caste and class at a later stage in her life cycle. Patriarchy, however, operates through far more complicated trajectories, with crisscrossing power lines that fracture both domains and that, at times, unite segments across the blocs. The same women, depending on the presence of sons, her husband’s status and fortune, and her age, gets to know both subjection and rule. He added that this is why, and how, perhaps, women are, much of the times, complicit subjects of patriarchy.

**FACTORY WORK:**

In socialist societies there tends to be more equality between men and women than capitalist societies. During the
early stages of industrialization after the industrial revolution in England (dates from 1750-1841) the factory system steadily replaced the family as the unit of production. The women were employed in factories where they often continued their traditional work in textiles. From 1841 until the outbreak of the first world war in 1914 a combination of pressure from male workers and reformers restricted female employment in industry and gradual withdrawal of all female labour from the factory. During these years women received many legal and political rights but all these had little effect on the mother housewife role, which was central to their lives. There was a ‘separation of men from the daily routines of domestic life’ and emergence of the economic dependence of women and children on men and “the isolation of housework and childcare from other work. Thus in the twentieth-century British society housewife mother role became institutionalized as “the primary role for all women. The exclusion of women from modern factory industries is no doubt related to their low proportion in the population of the cities and towns in which the factories and mills were situated. Both these- women’s exclusion from industry and their absence from the city –were the products of a gender-specific pattern of migration which started in the late eighteenth century. Calcutta and its industrial suburb were continuously augmented by fresh male migration and that the proportion of women available for industrial employment was consequently low. There were also women who came with families or alone from Bihar, the united provinces. It appears that management should have favoured women’s employment. They paid the women and children they employed less than the men. Many managers and supervisors in the Calcutta jute industry were Scotsmen trained in Scotland. Historically, capitalists have shown a preference for women’s labour in three different ways. First, as in China and Japan, women’s wages were so low as to offset the higher cost
of recruiting them. There the cotton textile industry was able to draw on a large pool of young unmarried women. They harnessed cultural values of chastity and female subservience to exercise an extraordinary degree of control over their workforce. Second, women have been valued, as in the tea plantations of Assam, for their reproductive functions to stabilize the labour force and ensure that it is self-reproducing. Third, all the world over capitalists have used and re-inforced the notion of women’s wage being supplementary to the main earnings of the male head of the household to pay women less and ensure the flexibility of their workforce.

The most basic factor which inhibited women from taking to entrepreneurship till recently was the attitude of society towards a woman’s role and place in society—there social values and attitudes were reflected in the education and socialization of girls, and in the institutional arrangement of society. Traditionally, a woman’s reproductive role was considered her primary role and her role as producer secondary, unless, as in the low income classes, economic necessity forced a woman to support the family. Today, fortunately, the scene has changed. Women entrepreneurs, though still very few in number, are successfully operating ventures with investments ranging from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 5 lakhs and employing from 10 to several 100 employees. Though many have started ventures using women’s traditional skills in cooking, stitching, knitting etc. and have set up units manufacturing processed foods, readymade garments or offering beauty care services etc. there are others who have into very non-traditional fields, using diverse technical skills and are competing with men successfully.

WOMEN’S ORGANIZATION:

In the years following independence, members of the women’s organizations felt betrayed by their male allies. They
did not receive the rewards they expected, especially nomination to influential positions and supports for the reform of Hindu family law; nevertheless, they stayed loyal to the concept of universal franchise with no special privileges for women. Women members of the constituent assembly, opposed special concessions for women and so reservations disappeared with universal franchise. Through the 1920s and 1930s, there were three positions on women’s role in politics. Leaders of the women’s organizations believed women should be heard because they understood the special needs of women and children. From the time women were first allowed to vote, respectable women expressed their horror that prostitutes, when property owners, were enfranchised. When women’s organizations claimed they spoke for all women they did not include prostitutes in their definition of women.

Women’s organizations in to three phases 1) first phase (1850-1915), (2) second phase (1915-1947), and (3) third phase (1947–present). The third phase can further be classified into three sub phases. (1) the period of accommodation (1947- late 1960s), (2) the period of crisis (late 1960s -1975) and (3) 1975-todate). In first phase social reformer Mahadev Govinda Ranade founded the widow re-marriage association and the Deccan education society. In madras presidency, Kandukuri Vireslingam founded the widow re-marriage association in 1891. Pandita Ramabai is considered, the first feminist to address other women directly about emancipation. She founded the Arya Mahila Sabha, which is known as the first feminist organization in India. She set up Mukti mission. For young widows, and Krupa sadan and Sharda sadan in 1889 for destitute women. By the late nineteenth century several women’s organizations began to be formed in several parts of India such as Benga Mahila Samaj and the Aghorekamini Nari Samiti in Bengal, Satara Aballonatni sbha in Maharastra, Mahila Seva Samaj in
Banglore, Prayos Mahila Samiti in Allahabad, Bharat Mahila Parishad or ladies conference (1904).

In the second phase, women’s India association by Annie Besant. The WIA published a monthly Journal Stridharma in English. The national council of women in India (NCW) was formally founded in 1925 when the women of Bombay, Calcutta and madras. It came to be accepted as the national ‘branch’ of the international council of women and was the first all India women’s organization intimately associated with an international organization. All India women’s conference; the women’s association of madras, Mumbai, Pune and other cities assembled in Pune city at Fergusson college in 1927 under the presidency of maharani Chimanbai Gaekward of Baroda. This brought everyone on a common platform to launch a women’s movement on a firm footing to acquire adult franchise and equal rights for women (in health, education, inheritance, marriage laws, social reforms, etc). national women’s volunteer organization was established in various regions during 1930 had as its aim the attainment of self – rule for women. It concentrated on banning foreign cloth, eradicating drinking of liquor, and producing khaddar. The genesis of the group lied in the fact that trafficking in women and children had increased to an unprecedented extent in west Bengal and the Calcutta area. In third phase, in the period of accommodation, women’s participation in the freedom struggle developed their critical consciousness about their role and rights in independent India. The state adopted a patronizing role towards women. Women in India did not have to struggle for basic rights as did women in the west. This was a period primarily of accommodation. Some of the organizations took up, constitutional measures such as “the marriage act of 1954, the Hindu code bill 1955-56, those bills took up the issue of marriage, divorce, succession,
guardianship and adoption. The period of crisis (late 1960s-1975), in 1971, the CPI(M) set up the Shramik Mahila Sangathana (working women’s organization), to mobilize women of the lower middle and working class affected by the growing economic crisis and economic hardship. The anti-price rise movement (1973) was a united front composed of women from the CPI(M), socialist, congress and non-party middle-class housewives from urban areas in western India. It was the year that the official status of women commission published their report, towards equality, on women’s low and ever decreasing status in Indian society. In 1973-74 Maoist women formed the progressive organization of women, initiating a self–consciously Feminist critique of radical leftist politics along with an overarching analysis of gender oppression. In 1975- today, some of the important women’s organizations in this period included SEWA, national commission of women( New Delhi), national council of women (Pune), joint women’s program (Delhi), kali for women (Delhi) and several others. A national commission for women was set up on 31 January 1992. It hears complaints from women on refusal of right, cruelties and other atrocities and redresses their grievances. The Rashtriya Mahila Kosh or the national credit fund for women was formed on 30 March 1993. Poor and needy women who form self help groups (SHG) to start an industry or occupation are assisted financially from this fund. The Balika Samriddhi Yojana (1997) was founded to help poor mothers and their girl children. Female children born to poor mother below poverty line benefit by this scheme. Swa Shakti project (1998) is primarily to assist women to start some productive work and they are financially assisted by the government through this scheme. There are many more steps taken by the government and non-government organizations (NGOS) aimed at the development of women in India.
Women’s participation in the labour force and labour issues

Early writers, who were very conscious of what was happening in the towns, were certain that the labour force participation of women increases during socio-economic development. They also thought that this paralleled nineteenth century European experience. However this historical view was a very narrow one, which focused on the new experiences of middle class women who wrote about their own lives, and ignored poor women who had always had to find employment as factory hands, domestic servants and agricultural labourers. Similarly discussions of changes in Asia concentrated on the theory of Purdah and the work of middle class liberal reformers rather than on poor women working on the fields. Despairing of adequate data on female participation in agriculture some more sophisticated analysis have limited their discussion to non-agricultural employment. Thus Collver and Langlois’s study shows that the relationship between the proportion of women in the labour force and the level of industrialization is much clearer when the agricultural labour force is excluded from the calculations and becomes neater still if domestic service is also excluded. Studies which examine trends in women’s labour force participation at different levels of development by restricting the scope to certain types of employment can only provide partial answers to questions about changes in women’s role.

Many women agreed that lending grain to neighbors from the household’s grain reserves had to be done surreptitiously and involved risk as it incurred the wrath of husbands or other male household heads. The plethora of such accounts and the near uniformity of similar experiences of rural women, testifies to the unequal sharing of resources within household and the extreme powerlessness of women despite their considerable economic contributions and labour
for the well being of households. The bias is starkly revealed even in the ways in which males establish their colonial control over agricultural technologies, the government extension schemes and sources of information. Unless specified under the scheme, women were technologies. Female seclusion practices, illiteracy and lack of access to public spaces and markets, lack of mobility etc. are usually cited inability to mobilize founds for new forms of production and marketing further aggregate the marginalization of rural women. As women are not seen as the primary producers within households, their ability to obtain credit for productive purposes, even for the purpose of milch animals, seeds, farm machinery and pump-sets etc. is severely hampered. Such biases so deep-rooted that women-headed households, single women farmers and widows are forced to rely on male members to negotiate with the bureaucracies of credit-giving institution and banks.

Social science has long acknowledged a neglect in research on the heterogeneity of labour in south Asia and the conditions which affect female labour force participation. It is also acknowledged that the differential patterns of male and female employment and earnings in agriculture and the cultural norms which impede women’s occupational and farm mobility, in turn has profound implications for the efficiency of production. Labour force consist of the employed and the unemployed. The employed or the workers participate in the production of goods and services for pay or profit while the unemployed are not at work but are actively in search of it. Together they constitute the labour supply available in any economy. Rural women were concentrated in agriculture in all the years to which data relate. For urban women, apart from agriculture, manufacturing and services were the other two industries of relative concentration. In rural India, women formed little more than a third of workers employed in
agriculture and manufacturing, while their share was a quarter in services in most of the years for which data are reported. In mining which included quarrying too women formed a fifth of all workers. Decline in their share in construction and trade in 1999/2000 compared to that in 1977/78 could be constructed as a positive change. Manual work in construction is strenuous and as noted earlier trade is regarded as the hotbed of underemployed. Manufacturing industry was the most important industry that employed bulk of the workers in the private sector. It accounted for nearly 62 percent of the total and 39 percent of the women workers in 1981. In 2000, manufacturing’s share in total employment declined marginally to 59% but the share of women in it increased to 45%.

Gender–based inequalities are universal and enduring. Women receive unequal treatment in many walks of life because they are women, economic discrimination is the most obvious and visible kind of discrimination, evidence of which can be given with data supporting its existence. Discrimination based on gender predates capitalism and though socialist economies succeeded in reducing it, they too could not eliminate it altogether. This kind of discrimination amounts to an unequal treatment of equals in the labour markets. It is difficult to say whether labour market discrimination is a cause or a consequence of the discrimination that women face within the family. Views differ but it is true that gender based discrimination is an outcome of complex, social, cultural process including relations between men and women in any society. Gender based discrimination which women experience in India after they enter the labour market is of three types. Women face employment discrimination, because of certain myths that prevail among employers regarding women’s commitment to work outside their own homes. Their inability to have access either to education or to skills and even to job
information often forces them to accept work which is similar to work that they do at home. This results in occupational segregation that restricts women to low-paid and low-productivity occupations. That equals are treated unequally is crystal clear in wage discrimination that prevails, both rural and urban sectors of the Indian economy.

Women in India are victims of employment discrimination because employers employ men rather than women as employees. Data from the censuses and the NSSO survey rounds revealed that women’s participation in economic activity was always lower than that of men. Occupational segregation is said to be the consequence of limited access women have to labour market information. Not only is their number in the labour market small but most of them are found in low-paid occupations. More often than not women working in the same occupation were their informants in the labour market.

WORK IN MINES:

The coal mining industry played an important role in the industrial expansion of our country under British rule. Coal was the prime energy fuel that propelled the rapid expansion of the railways and provided steam power for such factories as existed in India. The earliest recorded reference to coal mines in India can be traced to an application of Messrs S.G Heatly and J.Summer of the Bengal civil services 11th August 174, which submitted ‘proposals for working coal mine and selling coal in Bengal’ to the council of revenue at Calcutta…’ panchete and Bheerbhoom’… and they applied for an exclusive right for eighteen years, to work and sell coal in Bengal and its dependencies. It is stated that S. G Heatly procured English miners and made preparations for working the coal mines on a large scale. But soon, the English miners died of fever, and they had to be replaced by native
‘agricultural peasants’ of the adjoining villages who worked under European supervision. One of the basic features of the coal mining industry of India during the colonial period was that it was highly labour intensive. All the processes like cutting, hauling and loading were mostly done manually. The ‘agricultural peasants’ who were the first to work in the coal fields, came from adjoining villages and amongst them the Bauris formed the largest body. They were accompanied by their women, who were trained in surface work. Their women were engage for digging earth to uncover the coal seams and in raising coal from the quarries, but not for driving a gallery into a pit or to cut coal underground. With the expansion of the mining industry and especially with the coming of the railways, first in the Raniganj coal fields by 1855, and subsequently in other coal fields, the character of labour supply underwent a change. The next large stream of coal mine workers came from amongst the sandals, an ‘aboriginal’ tribe from Santhal Parganas who were lured by offer of free land for cultivation. They were joined by their women folk in underground workings.

In the early stages of the industry the Baur women were employed to turn the wooden ‘gin’ raising coal from pits by means of iron chains, to the surface. Other type of surface work done by women included removing coal and refuse from the pithead and stacking coal. With the mechanization of the mine, the gins were replaced by electric haulage or by steam winding engines. Women now constituted an important part of the underground mine worker force. The Santhali women were group who not only worked on the surface, but also followed their men underground to load coal cut by them. Similarly, a good majority of women belonging to the low castes recruited from Bihar, Bengal and central province also followed this practice. Women were employed as loaders, and some were used for bailing out water from the mines, for removing coal
from the galleries and to push tubs on buckets from the coal face to the bottom of the shaft. The first world war provided a great impetus to the coal mining industry. Between 1914 and 1923 the number of coal mines increased by 322 and the production rose from 16 to 20 million tons. So the number of coal mine workers were also increased. by 1920 women constituted 37.5% of the workforce. In the meantime during by the passing of Indian mining act of 1923, the government were under pressure of forbid the working of women as underground labourers as it was considered dangerous for them. Though the government did not prohibit the women workers working underground, it left the issue of complete withdrawal within a specified period to be taken by the local governments. The women workers were much sought after because they were paid low wages. their traditional forms of work in mine were abhorred by men so it was found very difficult to induce them in such a large number so as to replace the women workers from underground mines.

The second world war saw increased construction activities undertaken by the military: and the high wages provided by them led to shift of workers from coal mines toward those sites. from 1942 coal production began to be affected due to shortage of workers. With the termination of the labour supply in coal mines became normal. So we can see that women workers were exploited in various forms. first, at the hands of their European supervisors, in the ware houses. Filthy language and dirty abuses formed a large percentage of the limited vocabulary of the superior staff. Corporal punishment was resorted to without rhyme or reason. And the inhuman treatment by commodifying women as gifts by Sardars for different uses became wide spread. The above conditions were due to the absence of any effective representation by women in the trade unions, although we do
find them protesting with help of their men folk and also their role in effective strikes.

NEW JOBS IN THE CITY MAID SERVANTS AND PROSTITUTION

Despite opposition, the late nineteenth witnessed a growing acceptance of formal education for women. In the vanguard of this movement were western-educated men, employed in government service and the new professions, who wanted companionate wives. The product, the ‘new women’, educated about the home and the world but firmly located in the family became an essential force in the development of nationalism. For these newly educated women, living under what Judith Walsh has called “new patriarchy”, this was personally liberating education made it possible for them to participate in shaping their own lives and futures. However, none of these women or their families imagined them using their education to earn a living. According to Geraldine Forbes, those who favored formal education wanted to create “new women” – ideal help mates, knowledgeable about the home and the world, yet dedicating their lives to building the new family for the new nation. Most of the women who are remembered by historians did not use their education to earn a living but rather remained in their homes and devoted their spare time to writing, women’s organizations, social uplift, and the arts. In contrast, medical education was designed to prepare women to work outside the home for wages. Whether it was meant for midwives, doctors, or hospital assistants, it forced the recipients to play in between roles, dependent on the raj for their education and in many cases their jobs, and dependent on their families for status and support in their new roles. In the late nineteenth century, the colonial government decided to promote western medical care for Indian women from high ranking and respectable families. Their efforts were informed by a static view of purdah and a construction of the
zenana as a dangerous and unhealthy place where disloyalty flourished and women suffered without medical aid. Their goal was to penetrate the zenana, not with force but with the forceps of the lady doctors: to do so they created a new and inferior class of lady doctors, trained on western medicine through the vernacular, and supported their employment in women only hospitals in the districts of Bengal. At the same time, they worked to discredit traditional medicine and medical practitioners. He added that, the viceroy pronounced the experiment successful, but when we look more closely the picture changes. The women who carried out the medical mission of the raj were not true believers, partly because of inadequate training, partly because they were trained in and worked in the vernacular. Delivering western medicine without an adequate support system, they had to rely on traditional practitioners and traditional medical remedies. Practicing medicine households and had to work in harmony with the beliefs about medicine they found there.

Maid servants and sexual exploitation:

Domestic workers come from vulnerable communities and backward areas. The majority are poor, illiterate, unskilled and do not understand, underpaid and poorly regulated. The employment of minors as domestic workers is still a common practice in India. In pre-modern times, domestic workers were mostly associated with rich aristocracy like kings in the medieval era and landlords in the colonial era. There are so many issues including lack of decent wages, work conditions and defined work time, violence, abuse, sexual harassment at workplace, victimization at the hands of traffickers/placement agencies, forced migration, lack of welfare measures, lack of skill development avenues etc. Sexual exploitation refers to sexual acts performed for survival, money or other payment, this includes trading sexual favors for shelter, clothing, or other goods and services. This includes
commercial exploitation such as prostitution, stripping and pornography. The employers are educated, yet the traditional notion of a “servant” is deep rooted in their minds. Many of them think that it is justified to look down upon the domestic workers and there have been numerous cases of employers exploiting domestic workers, both physically and sexually. The extent of exploitation is more severe in smaller towns than metropolitan cities and in places where a drastic worker is attached with only one employer.

Prostitution in India is the oldest profession. It denotes providing sex work in exchange for money. In the colonial era, when these outsiders curbed the traditional textile industry, weaponry, etc. and these communities had to turn to prostitution for livelihood. There were the ‘Ganikas’ in ancient times whose equivalent in modern times came to be the tawaifs or courtesans who maintained vast establishments under the patronage of the nawabs, men of the nobility. Besides these, these were also mentioned in some texts the ‘kulatar’ and soarini. Kulatas are people were married women who secretly would leave their home to meet with their lover or lovers. Soarini, who was such a shameless creature that she openly engaged in extra-marital affairs despite the disapproval of her husband and family. A society ordered, especially colonial India and structured by men could at her only as a sex object.

British drafted such a legislation as the contagious diseases act of 1864 and implemented it with rigour upon its subjects in India. Under this act and the cantonment rules, the British and other European solders in India were not only permitted but promoted to hold native young girls as prostitutes for their carnal pleasure. There were placed with each regiment from twelve to fifteen nature women, who dwelt in appointed houses called chaklas. These women were allowed to consort with British solders only, and were registered by the cantonment magistrate.
For the English administrators, they were in the least concerned about the increase in prostitution amongst native women. From a valuable sociological study of prostitutes in nineteenth century Bengal by Sumanta Banerjee, one comes to know a lot about their activities, modes of operation and their perceptions of the ‘Bhadralok society’ around them. Banerjee’s work is indeed an immense contribution to this field. He tells us how the British officialdom, obsessed as it was with castes and religious segregation, also differentiated the prostitutes on the same basis. The British viewed the Indian harlot as a medical or hygiene problem, and they were concerned only to the extent that the native women could be precluded from spreading venereal diseases to their soldiers and officers.

**Prostitution:**

The issue of prostitution brings to the force many of the contradictions in feminist politics, and the ambivalence in dealing with issues of sexuality, reflected both in Indian and western feminist politics. There are, essentially, at least three ways in which Indian feminist have addressed the issue of prostitution—silence, as hurt and violence, and as potential choice and liberation. Radical feminism draws a connection between pornography and prostitution. According to this perspective, pornography is created through force and coercion in two ways: by coercing women to engage in pornographic representations and by creating a pornographic spectacle is on where the classic male fantasy, or men seen as abusing women and women seen as enjoying the abuse. Further it is argued that there is a close connection between pornography and prostitution. Prostitute rights groups are important not only in what they say but in that they articulate positions that are based on their experience. What is at stake here is the articulation of the experiences of prostitutes and the creation of identities that challenge feminist hegemonic constructions of their lives. The
politics for the rights of women in prostitution seems to have emerged in India in the decade of 1990s, and the most cited force initiating the mobilization among the women was the HIV/AIDS prevention and control discourse.

Another force facilitating the emergence of organizations of and for women in prostitution is that of the anti-trafficking discourse that seeks to prevent trafficking and engage in rescue and rehabilitation operations that aim to assist women who are compelled, coerced or duped into prostitution. However, this notion of trafficking of women linked only with violence is complicated, if we locate it in the matrix of global economy. The struggle by women in prostitution in a post-colonial country like India have not been a creation of AIDS intervention and anti-trafficking endeavors. These struggles date back to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as the women in prostitution battled as individuals and informal groups against stigmas and oppressive laws. The seeds of contemporary organization can be traced to this history of debates and collective actions around prostitution. These historical struggles were started by the women in prostitution, more specifically by those who were socially recognized as ‘prostitute’.

It was the site of the Devadasi abolition movement on which prostitution came to be debated in 1970s and 1980s, where in the Devadasi practice was marked, especially by the dalit movement as superstition and prostitution. Hence, attempts were made to abolish the custom and to rehabilitate the women. The Devadasi abolition movement noted that Devadasis formed a major source for recruitment in prostitution, and located the practice in superstition, poverty and illiteracy among lower castes. The practice itself was seen as a form of prostitution supported by the Brahmanical religion. Notably, the movement mobilized the Devadasi’s, seeking to bring out their voices and was supported by the dalit
movement. Prior to the British rule in India, the rulers of provinces or the princely states as existent then, would administer justice; in extreme circumstances, a judge appointed by the king would administer it. The Indian penal code, 1860, drafted by lord Macaulay, lays down certain provisions, which according to the conditions prevailing, acted as a ban on prostitution or any other kind of immoral behavior. The said activities were made offences; therefore, carrying on such activities was made punishable either by the way of a fine or imprisonment.

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